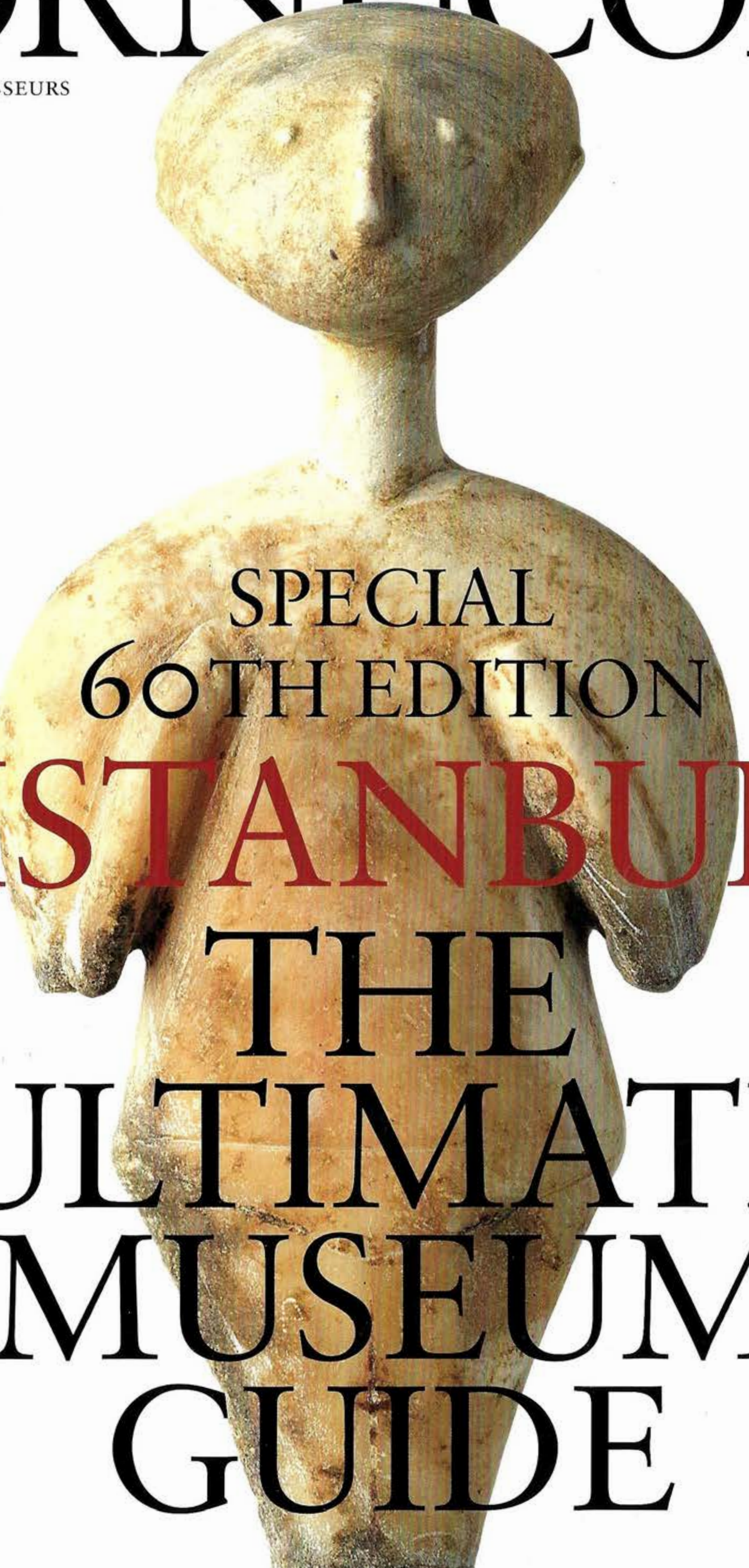
CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 60 2019/20



SPECIAL 60TH EDITION

ISTANBUL

THE ULTIMATE MUSEUM GUIDE

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Cover Early Bronze Age marble figurine, western Anatolia, mid-3rd millennium BC (height 12.2cm), Sadberk Hanım Museum – see page 146
Photograph: Hadiye Cangökçe / Sadberk Hanım Museum Archive

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THE ORIGINAL 'CORNUCOPIA'
The Latin *cornu copiæ* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn and a symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

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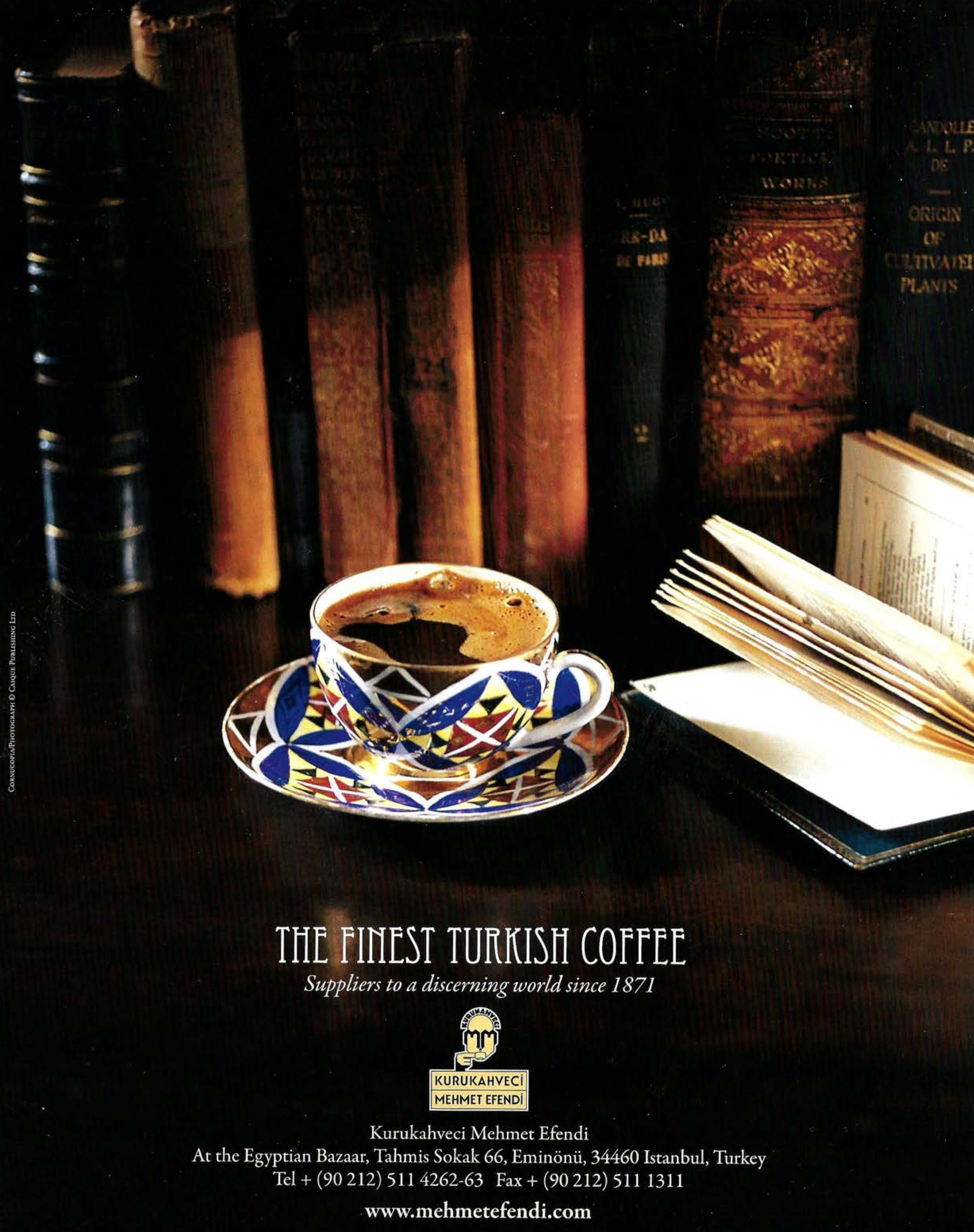

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CONNOISSEUR

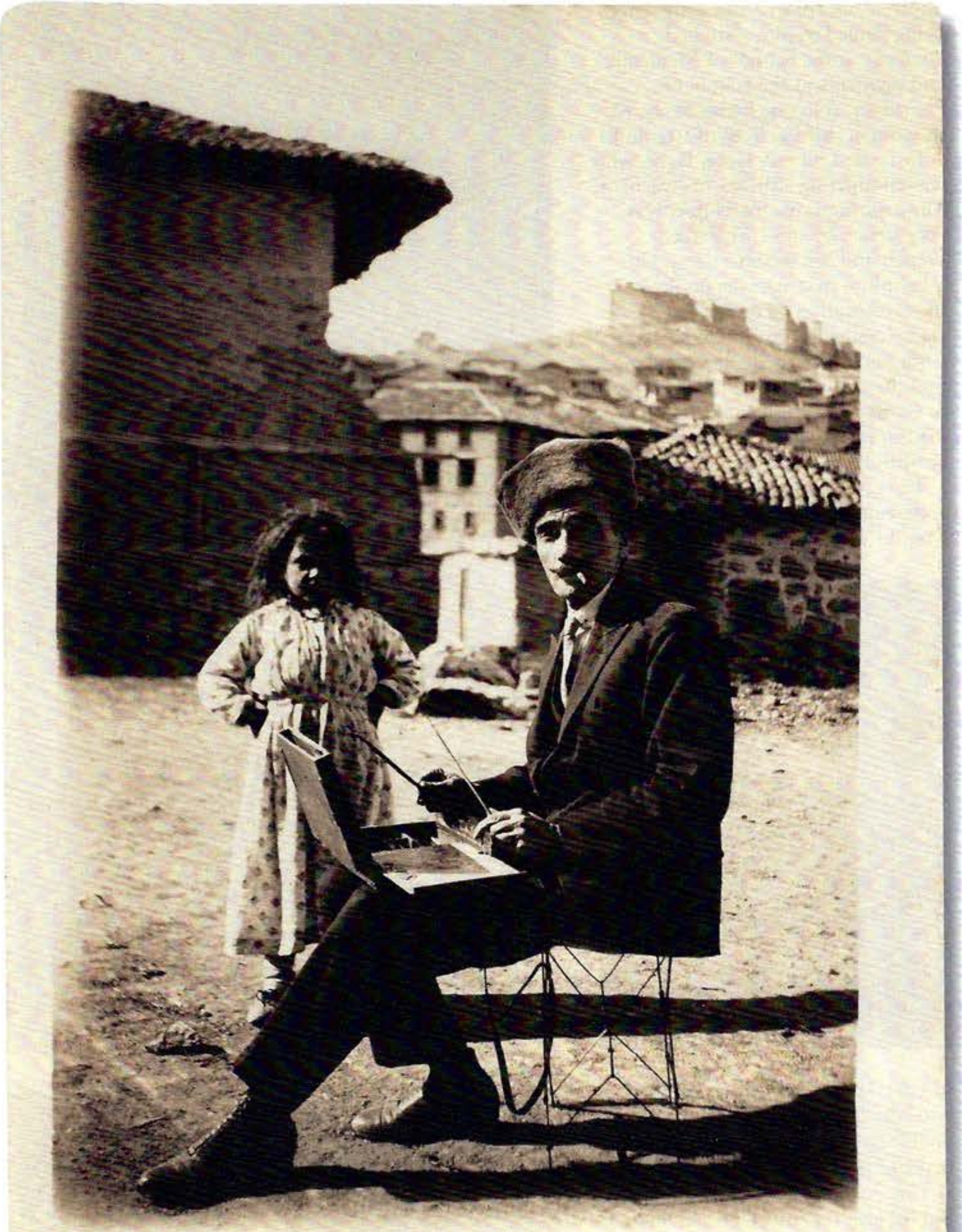
THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM'S TRIBUTE TO THE FINEST COLOURIST AND DRAUGHTSMAN OF THE '1914 GENERATION'; ORIENTALISM AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM; NEW ART SPACES THAT PUT TURKEY ON THE MODERN ART MAP. PLUS TROY: A 3,000-YEAR-OLD LOVE STORY

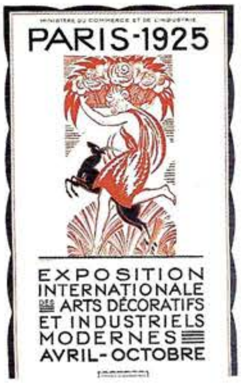
ETERNAL YOUTH

THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM'S WIDE-RANGING EXHIBITION 'AVNİ LİFİJ: THE MODERN OF HIS TIME' ILLUMINATES THE TALENTS OF AN ARTISTIC GENIUS. BUT IT SHEDS NO LIGHT ON ONE ENDURING MYSTERY OF HIS LIFE. BY ROSE SHEPHERD

The image is instantly familiar to devotees of Hüseyn Avni Lifij, a seminal figure in Turkish impressionism. Titled *Man with Pipe: Artist's Self-Portrait*, and painted in 1908, it shows a middle-aged man, puffing away, glass of wine in hand, a sock over his shoulder, a fedora on his head. It issues a challenge to societal values of the day – and it poses a conundrum. If he was born in 1870, as his official papers state, Avni Lifij would have been 38 or 39 when he created the work. Yet, according to friends and family, he was born in 1888, and evidence points to a precocious talent, an artist gifted beyond his years and ahead of his time, playing with self-portrait. Perhaps, as has been suggested, he was picturing himself as a dissipated character from a French novel. After all, at the age of seven he'd begun illustrating the books he read.

Certainly Hüseyin Avni was not born when his parents arrived in Anatolia from the Sochi region, in the Great Circassian Exile

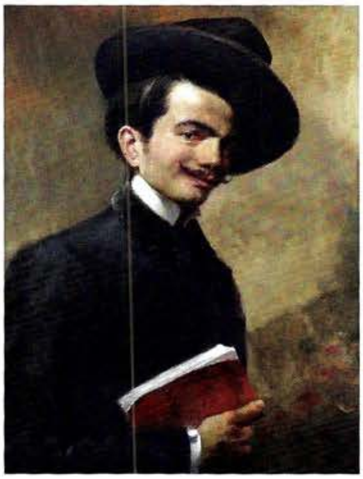




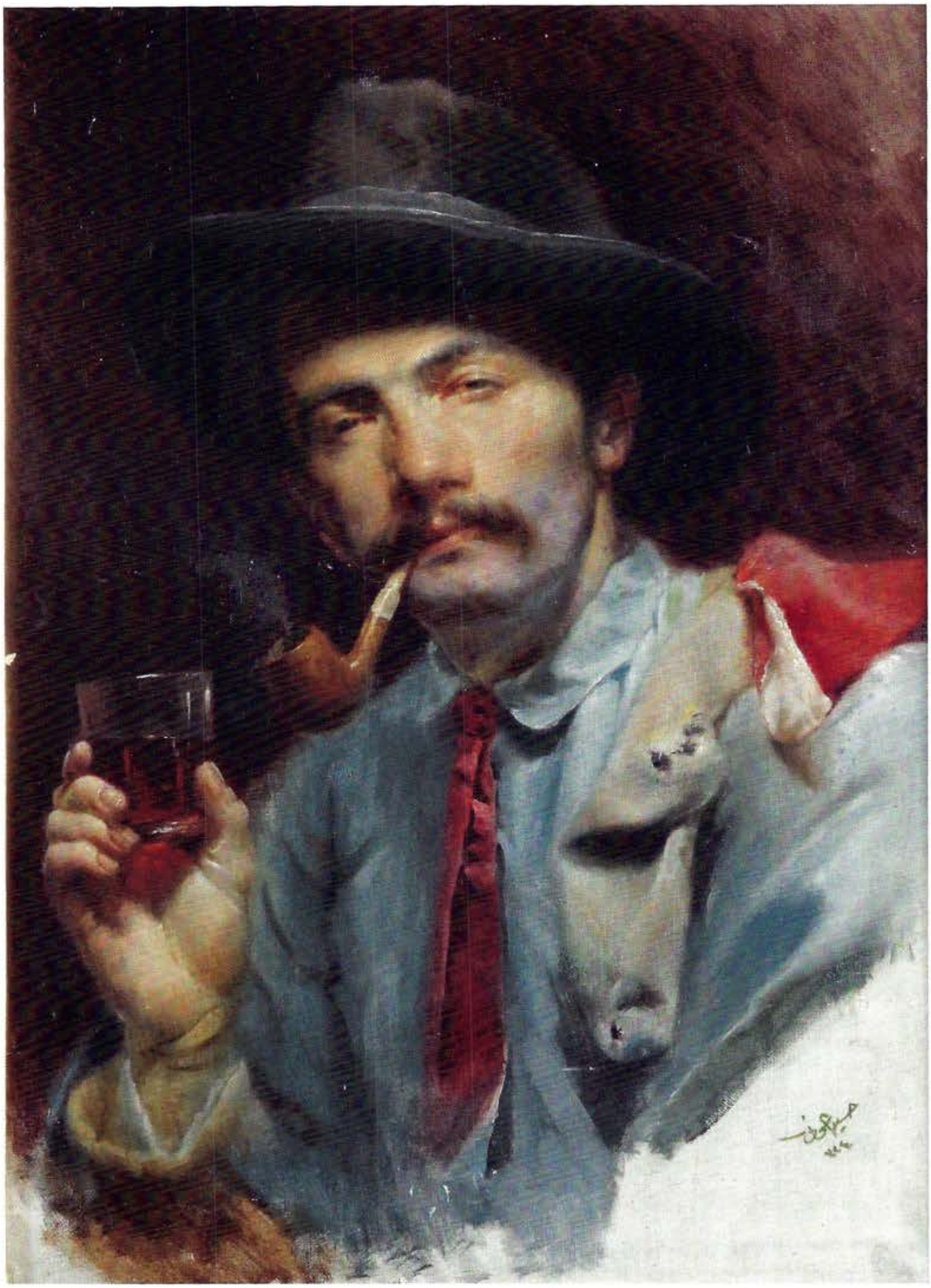
Ever the maverick Lifij (above) working from nature, and the Paris show which ushered in the new Art Deco era. He visited in secret, defying the authorities, who had refused to issue travel papers of 1864, nor probably before their move to Istanbul, when the documents show just one girl child. His mother was the daughter of a Circassian lord; his father, Abdullah, was of Ubykh origins. By 1893 the family was living in the Fatih district of Istanbul, where Abdullah collected tolls at the Galata Bridge. The boy's education was disrupted by illness, but he was avid to learn. He received private tuition, attending the Alliance Israélite School to improve his French, and – art school being denied to him – studied anatomy at the School of Medicine, and pigments at the School of Pharmacy. (No one better captured the subtle, shifting hues of Istanbul.)

In 1906, Lifij met Henri Prost, who was conducting a survey of Ayasofya. The aspiring French architect was very struck by the Turk's fluent French and his Western dress. He taught him that age was noble, over-restoration anathema, and that art belonged to East as well as West. With his encouragement, Lifij would find the courage to show his work to Osman Hamdi Bey, director of the Imperial Museum, including the beautifully executed *Man with Pipe*.

The great Ottoman painter and archaeologist told Lifij that he would learn nothing at the Academy of Fine Arts, which he had founded, and which in 24 years he had been unable to reform. Instead he must make nature his teacher.


BELKIS AND ERDAL AKSOY COLLECTION

Then, as the despotic Abdülhamid lost his grip on power, Osman Hamdi persuaded Abdülmecid Efendi to grant Lifij a scholarship to study painting in Paris. Lifij and his royal patron would grow close, Crown Prince and son of an illiterate, exiled toll collector working side by side.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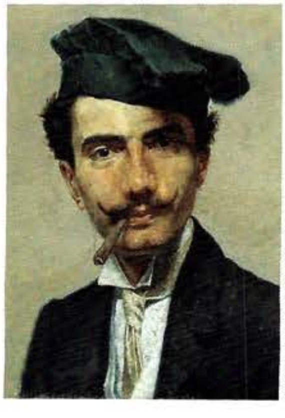
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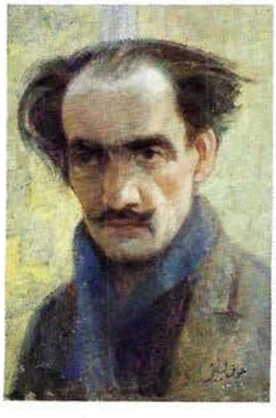
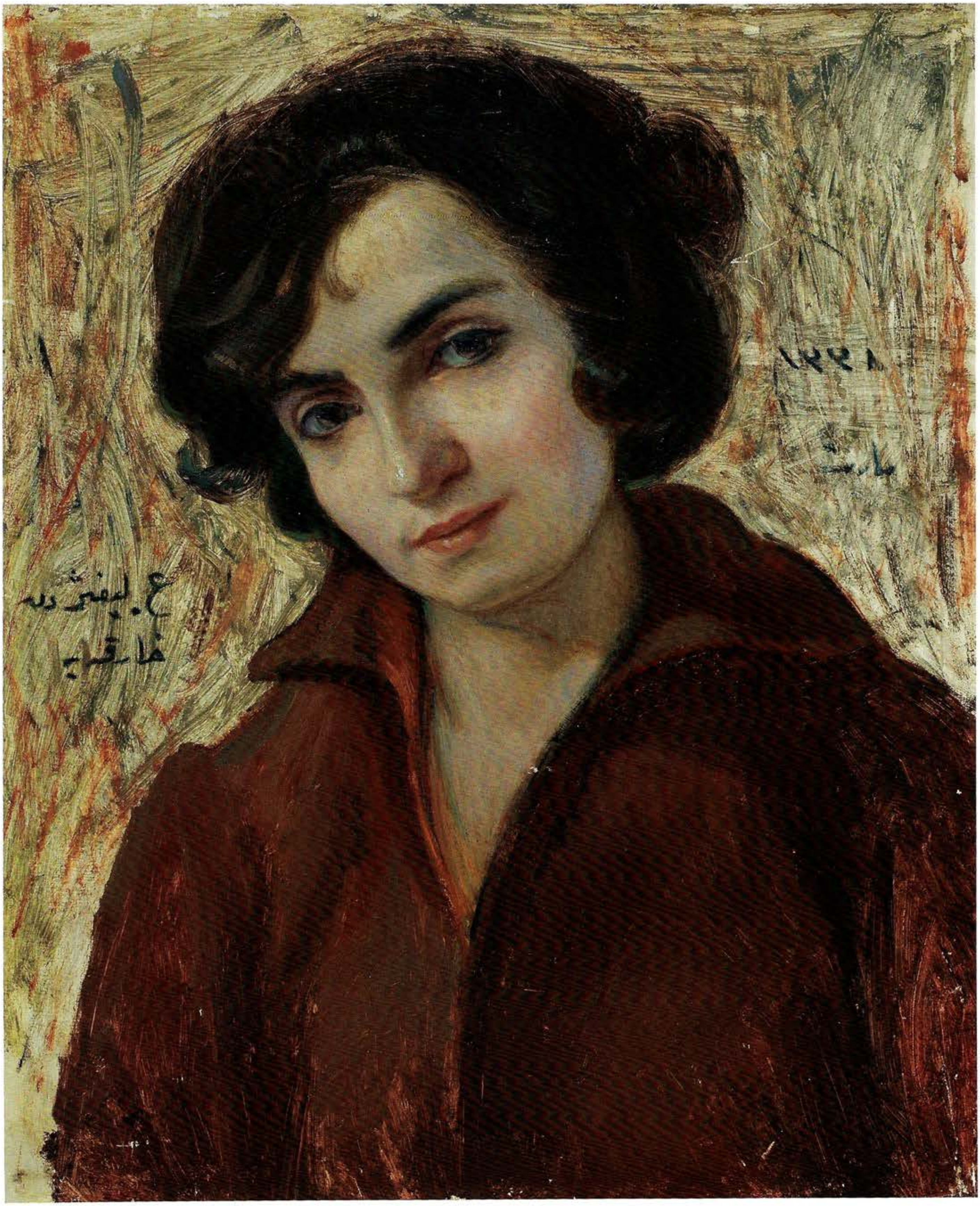

AYTEN AND İ ŞAZİ SİREL COLLECTION

This page: Lifij by Lifij In *Man with Pipe: Artist's Self-Portrait*, 1908 (above), which made his name, he is the dreaming bohemian. With a red book (above left) he is the man about town; and smoking a cigar (far left, painted after Paris), the wry intellectual. He painted his haggard last self-portrait (left) the day before his death, in 1927 **Opposite** His devoted wife and former pupil, Harika Sirel Lifij, in 1922, the year they married. She died in 1991



AYTEN AND İ ŞAZİ SİREL COLLECTION

Arriving in Paris in January 1909, Avni Lifij was an outrider for the so-called "1914 Generation", whose sojourn in the City of Light would end with the appalling darkness of the First World War. He joined the studio of Fernand Cormon, as well as visiting the painter and medallion designer Octave Denis Victor Guillonnet. For two years, Lifij refined his draughtsmanship and his eye for colour, as well as writing as an art critic, historian and philosopher, opening Turkish eyes to Giotto and the birth of the Renaissance.

In 1911 he was recalled to Istanbul, where he emerges as an inspirational teacher and a much-loved character. "He dazzled people with his being, his talk and his culture," revealed the painter Elif Naci in an article many years later: his works had "a magic quality", being "the most original works in his generation...They do not need anyone else to speak about them. They speak for themselves."

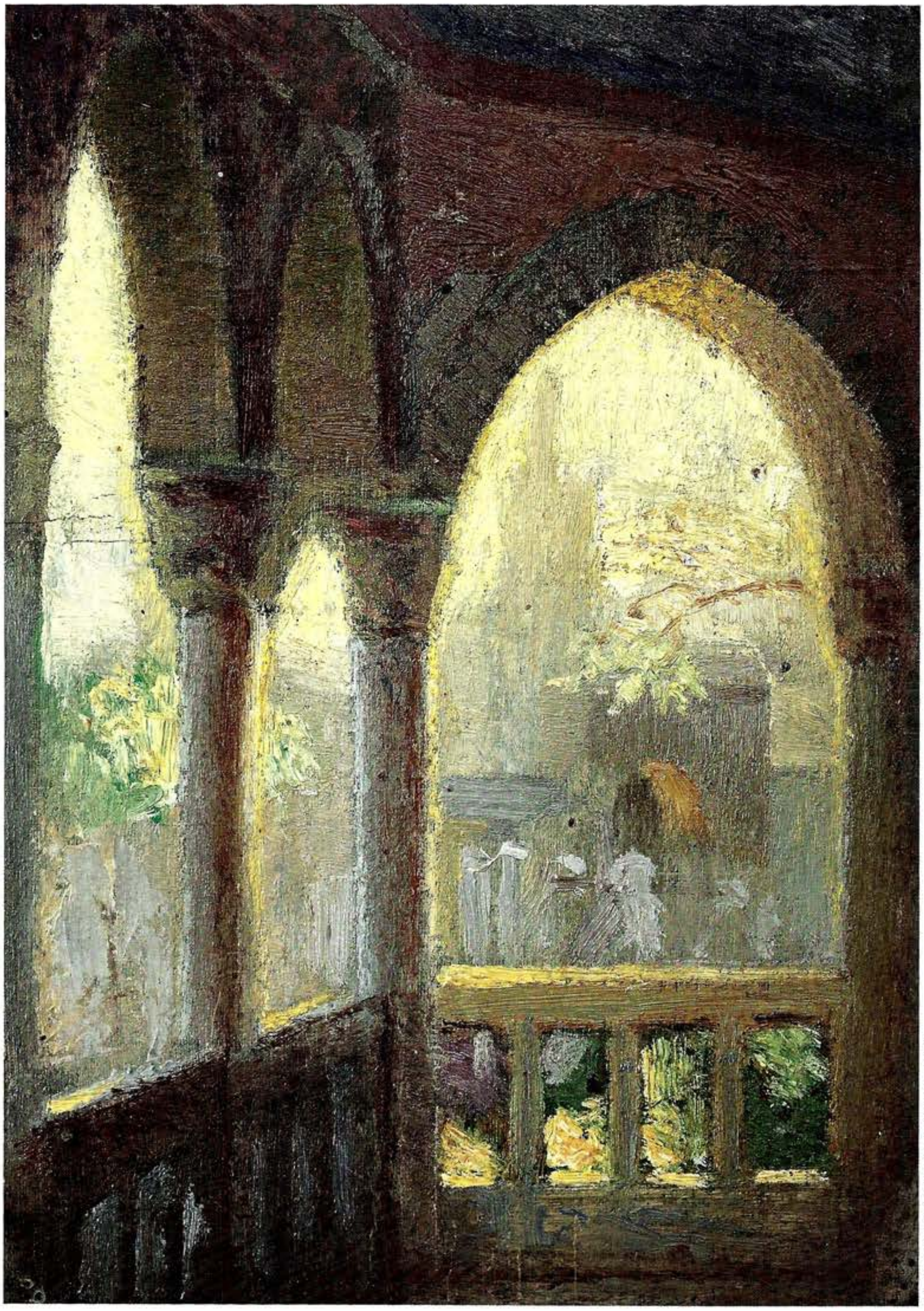
One who was clearly "dazzled" by Hüseyn Avni Lifij was his student Harika Sirel, with whom he exchanged vows in 1919, though their wedding was delayed by health problems until March 1922.

Ever the maverick, he defied the authorities to attend an international exhibition of decorative modern art in Paris, in which Turkey had been deemed "not ready" to participate. In so doing, he took a great risk, but Lifij understood more than most that life is short and must be fully lived.

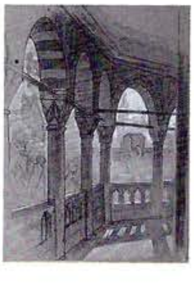
Hüseyn Avni Lifij died on June 2, 1927, in a small flat in the smart Art Deco Harikzedegan Apartments block near Istanbul's Beyazıt Square, leaving an astonishing body of work that includes paintings and drawings (in particular the small *pochades* for which he is best known), landscapes, portraits, allegorical studies, glass negatives, photographs and essays.

He was not yet 40 when he succumbed to TB – or he was closer to 60. The art historian Ömer Faruk Şerifoğlu – who has edited a collection of Avni Lifij's writings on diverse subjects from city planning to art history, for a book to accompany the exhibition – offers an intriguing theory. The boy was father of the boy. Consumption, that most romanticised disease, associated with poetic and artistic qualities, had robbed him of so much of his childhood, the "lost" years had simply not counted. ◆

'Avni Lifij: The Modern of His Time', Sakıp Sabancı Museum, until Jan 12; sakipsabancimuzesi.org. Catalogue available from cornucopia.net

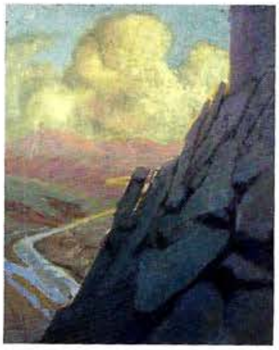


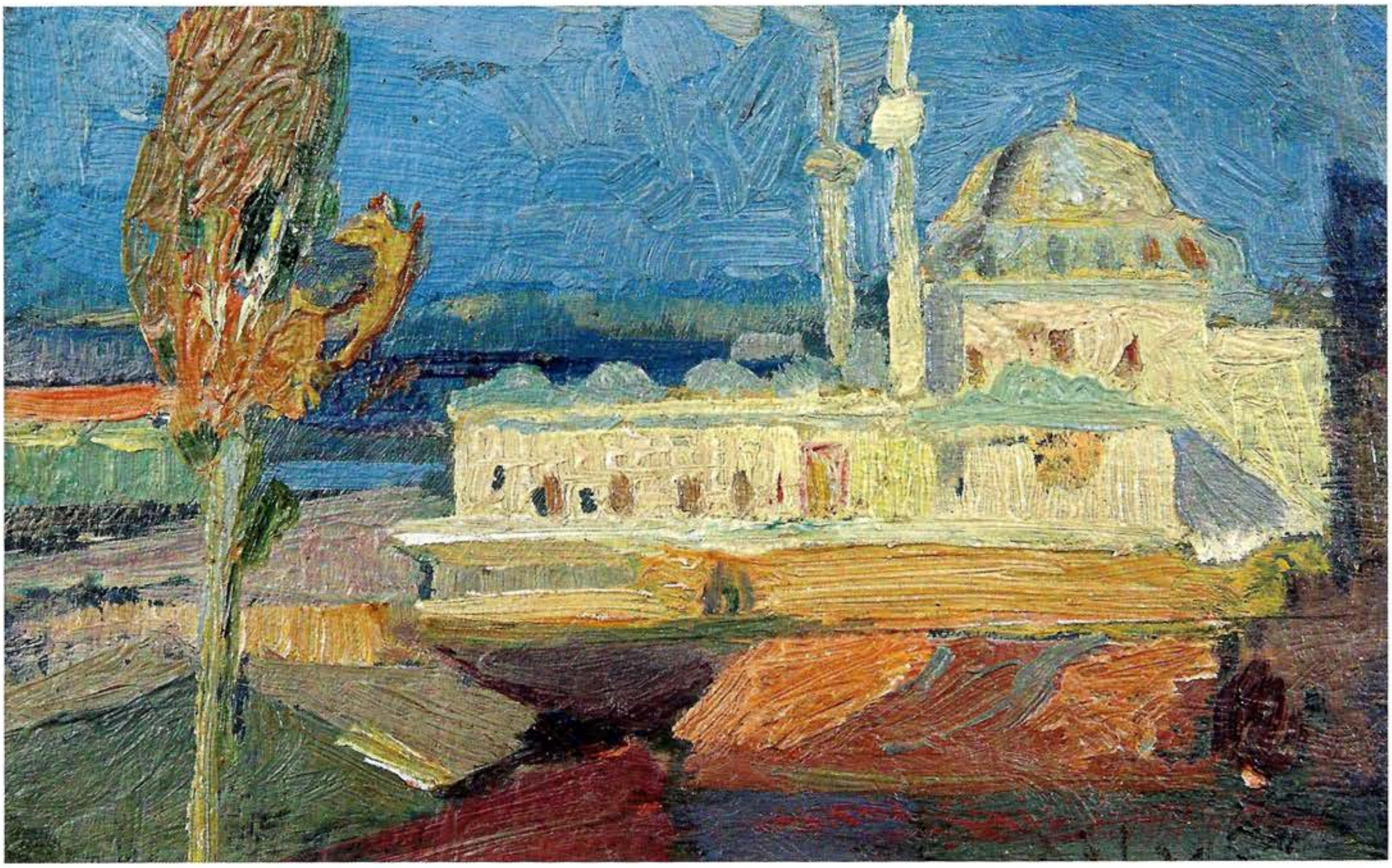
ALL IMAGES: BELKIS AND ERDAL AKSOY COLLECTION

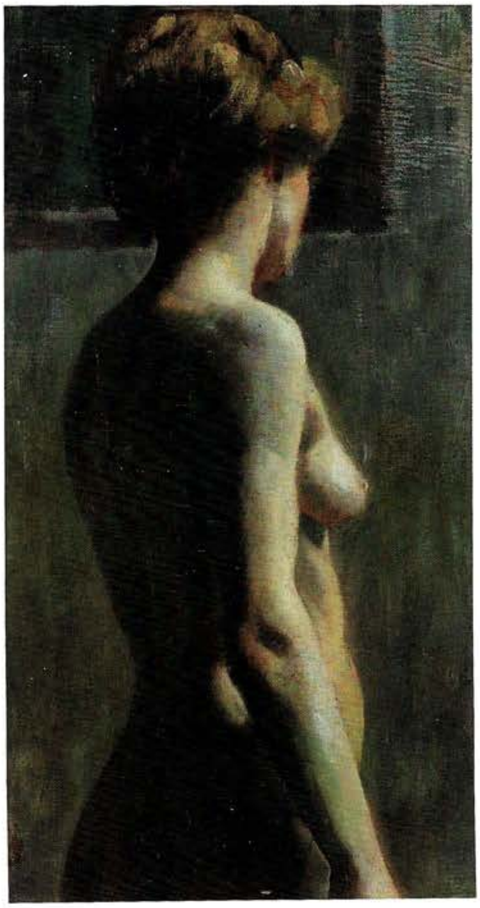


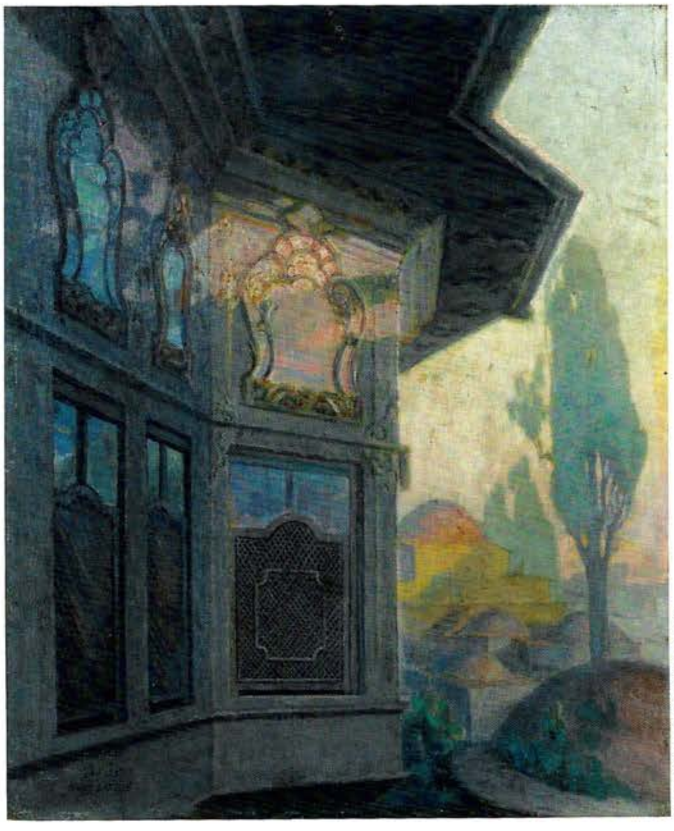
Left and above Süleyman the Magnificent's mausoleum. Lifij loved to draw Ottoman structures. When he painted them he captured the light with great intensity

Right and far right Ankara Castle. Prints from glass negatives reveal an equally talented photographer







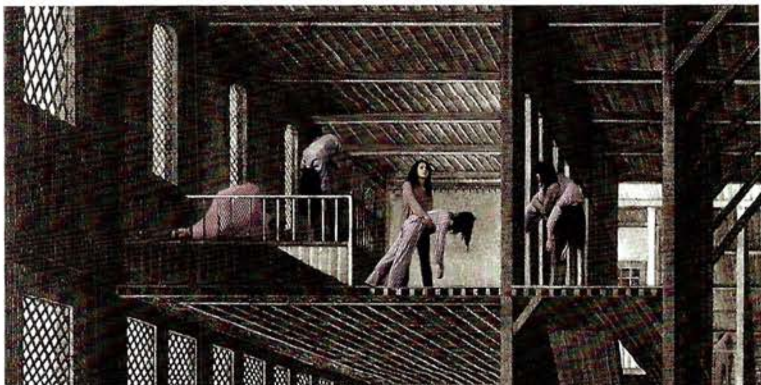


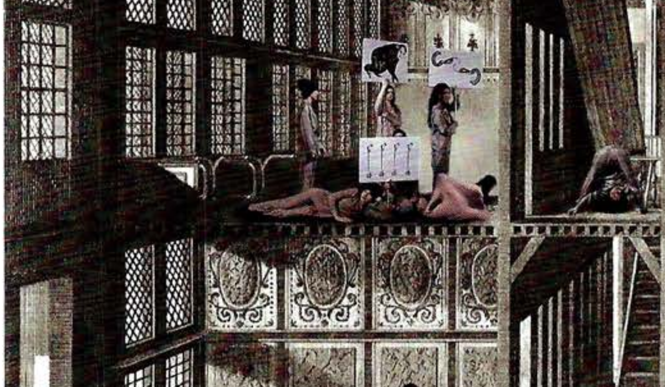
SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM COLLECTION

Above The Yavuz Selim Mosque, one of hundreds of *pochades*, oil sketches painted en plein air on panels that fitted neatly into his paintbox. Each took minutes to make, but they distil all he knew and loved about his art. Most are from the last five years of his life and were never shown in public. Lifij rarely sold his work
Left The Topkapı's Mihrişah Sultan pavilion. Lifij's friendship with the architect Henri Prost confirmed his passion for Ottoman architecture and his dislike of garish renovation
Far left A nude, Paris, 1909–10. Lifij believed passionately in formal study of the human form, and criticised his contemporaries, including Feyhaman Duran, the leading portraitist of the '1914 Generation', for neglecting it

THE OCCIDENTAL TOURIST

The British Museum explores the roots of Orientalism and Western fascination with the exotic East. By Denna Jones





In 1599 two men left Istanbul on a hazardous journey west through Ottoman territory to locate a ship bound for England. One of them, Thomas Dallam, was anxious to return home after his triumphant residency at the Ottoman court of Mehmed III. Dallam had built a fantastical mechanical pipe organ which he had demonstrated at court for Elizabeth I. Recognising a unique trade emollient, the Queen sent Dallam, the organ and other gifts to the Sultan, designed to foster trading relations between the West and the East in the early modern world. Entrusted to a dragoman on his departure from court, Dallam described his guide as "in religion a perfit Turke" and "our trustie frende". The dragoman was, in fact, by birth, an Englishman named Finche or Finch, from Dallam's native Lancashire.

High and low interchanges such as these between the East and West weren't anomalies, but part of a centuries-long tradition of cultural, economic and political exchange. The spirit of these encounters is represented by decorative arts, manuscripts, paintings, architectural models, film and photography in the exhibition *Inspired by the East: how the Islamic world influenced Western art*, a collaboration between the British Museum and Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia.

The exhibition's underlying theme is Orientalism – artistic and literary representations by the West of the cultures of the East. These two spheres of influence – Occident and Orient – are defined in this instance as Europe and North America (the West) and North Africa, Turkey, Syria and other chiefly Islamic countries that shoulder Europe along the Mediterranean and Black Sea (the East).

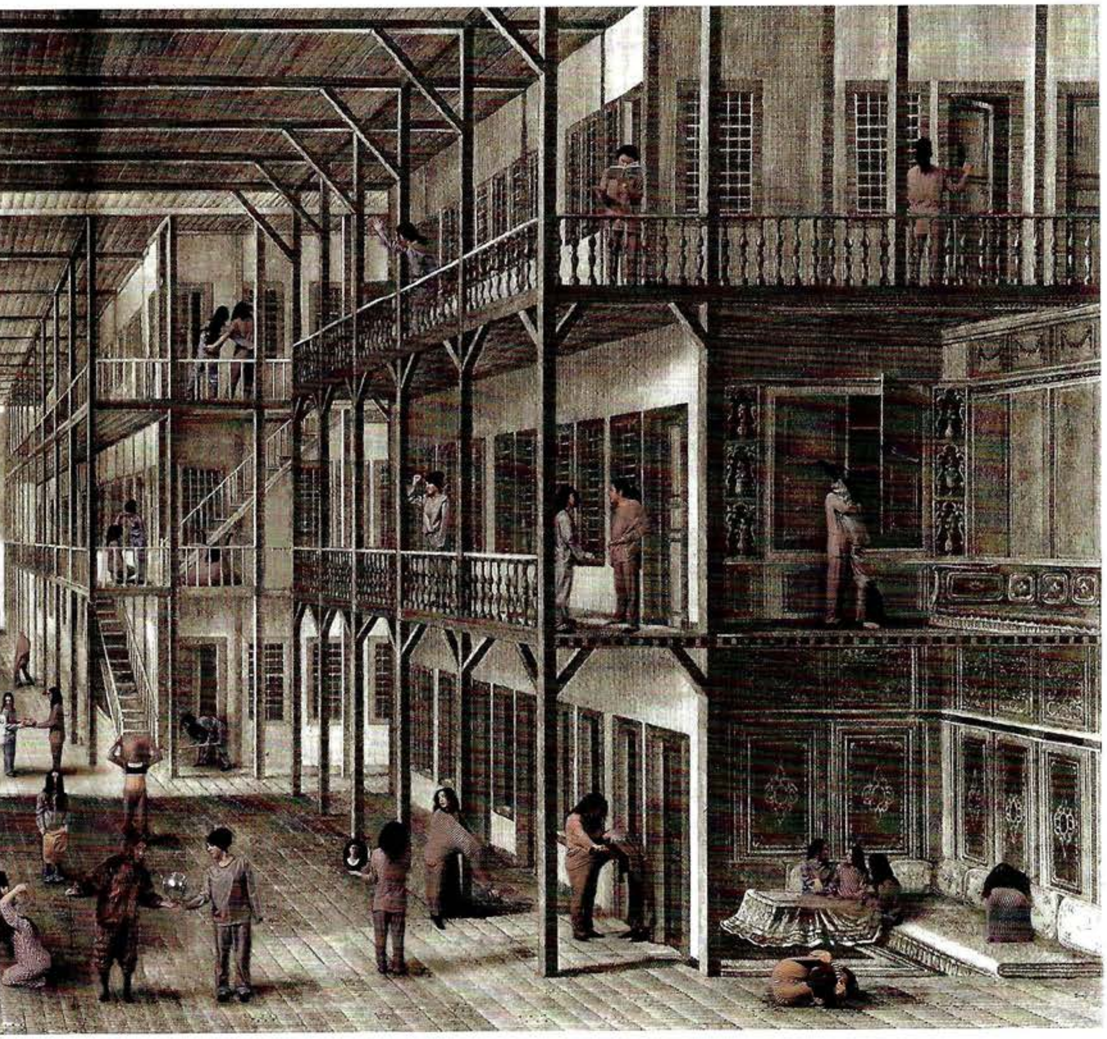
Neither Occident nor Orient was unified by religion. The exhibition's timeline traverses prolonged internecine conflicts between Christians (Protestant and Catholic) and Muslims (Sunni and Shia), and reveals fascinating examples of "recruitment" from one "side" to the other that demonstrate the similarities as well as the differences between Christianity and Islam, Occident and Orient.

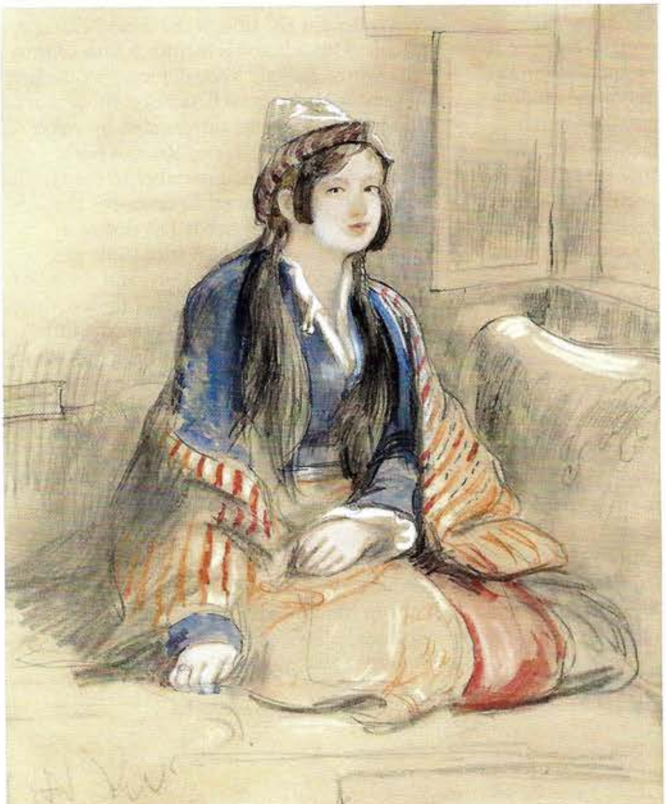
Such voluntary "recruitment" is seen in images such as Antony van Dyck's 1622 ink sketch of Sir Robert Sherley in Persian dress. Sir Henry Wotton had observed Sherley in Venice in 1609, describing his attire with thinly veiled admiration. "His habit and half his train and most of his language is Persian, except a jewelled crucifix given to him by the Pope, which he carrieth at the top of his turban". Sherley's Persian dress was a critical element in the arsenal of his existence – born an Englishman with 30 years as a Safavid diplomat – which together with the crucifix, signalled competency if not fluency in multiple cultures and religions. Similar wonderment had doubtless been felt by Londoners in 1600 when the Moroccan Ambassador (or, as he was described at the time, Legate of the King of Barbary to England) Abd al-Wahid bin Masoud bin Muhammad al-Annuri strode England's capital in thawb and turban, his ornate steel scimitar swinging from his waist.

Orientalism reached its apogee in the 19th century, and when it did, centuries of observational reports and depictions shifted in many instances to romantic interpretations of the East by Western artists. In our querulous

Top İnci Eviner's video installation *Harem* (2009) cheekily brings to life the Grand Seigneur's harem **Above** Antoine-Ignace Melling's 1819 etching was her inspiration **Right** *A Circassian Woman*, drawn by the Scottish artist Sir David Wilkie in the 'hidden domicile of a great Persian', to which he gained access in Istanbul in 1840

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: BRITISH MUSEUM





age of cancel culture, the exhibition and catalogue adopt a strategic approach to the confrontational aspects of Orientalism. Although not a new word, Orientalism gained currency after the publication of Edward Said's 1978 book, *Orientalism*, which argues the West enforced a monolithic view of the East that deprived the region of its autonomy and agency. Sensing that some might seize on Said to focus on the 19th-century section of the exhibition (as several mainstream reviews did), the exhibition subtly mines Said's views while the catalogue laces the debate throughout its essays.

"Disorient" is the title of the final room in the exhibition. It brings the exhibition into more or less the present day with the work of female artists who critique images of women fostered by the West and the East. The ultimate work is by İnci Eviner (left). A wall-sized projection of her three-minute video artwork *Harem* (2009) pulls the viewer into a subversion of *Interior of part of the harem of the Grand Seigneur* by Antoine-Ignace Melling.

Eviner dissolves Melling's 1819 architectural cross-section etching into one animated by women in various repetitive acts within the same cross-section. They wear baggy, gender-free clothes from which many try to escape or twist out of shape. Eviner's work often references mirrors. A foreground figure in *Harem* stands with her back to the audience, her face reflected in a hand mirror – is this figure Eviner? In *A Room of One's Own* Virginia Woolf argued that women need their own physical space for respite from men (not unlike the domestic harem) so she has freedom to write, think, and enjoy release from her role as a "looking-glass" for men.

Eviner's use of baggy clothes foreshadowed the clothing choice of 21st-century music phenomenon Billie Eilish, whose purposely baggy clothes allow her to retain her power because nobody, she says, sees what's underneath. With such ideas swirling in the subconscious, it's easy to sink into the film's mesmeric effect and allow three minutes to loop into 30. Immerse yourself for 30 minutes as I did and the darkened room will trick you into a disoriented and embarrassing close encounter with a black wall as you exit into the brightly lit museum shop.

This sharp return to reality allowed me to realise that, while Billie Eilish's clothing statement has no direct connection to this compelling exhibition, both she and İnci Eviner echo the exhibition's hope that it will inspire us to explore what lies beneath and beyond the idea of Orientalism. ◆

'Inspired by the East: how the Islamic world influenced Western art', British Museum, until Jan 26; britishmuseum.org

Denna Jones is a writer and Contributing Editor of Cover Magazine, dennajones@gmail.com

The kindness of strangers

WHILE ANDREW FINKEL FINDS ISTANBUL'S GARGANTUAN NEW AIRPORT DISTINCTLY PHARAONIC, GOOD HUMOUR IS RESTORED BY THE PLEASURES OF A DAILY COMMUTE TO WORK ACROSS THE BOSPHORUS, AND MOST OF ALL BY THE SIMPLE COURTESY EXTENDED BY THOSE HE MEETS ALONG THE WAY

MY CONSCIENCE TELLS ME, for the sake of the planet, to cut down on air miles, but the demon in my breast gives a supercilious shrug. The only consequence of such sacrifice will be the loss of my frequent-flyer gold card, so that I will be forever consigned to queuing with hoi polloi. It is not even a First World dilemma: how to square the furtive sense of privilege that possession of a frequent-flyer card brings with the yeti-sized carbon footprint left by using it. Unless you chalk up air miles, you can't renew the card, and unless you renew the card you don't get to grab a free breakfast in the lounge and then chalk up a few air miles more.

It is, therefore, perverse good news that Turkish Airlines is helping to break this vicious circle by moving to a new Istanbul airport where the experience of boarding a plane is so tedious that it will make the shame of being downgraded to silver much easier to bear. I have never been to Notre-Dame de la Paix, built in Ivory Coast's administrative capital, Yamoussoukro, where on any given Sunday a few hundred souls pray in a basilica built to hold 18,000. But the notion of a "hollow cathedral" well describes the sensation – after driving through mile after mile of freshly razed forest – of my first sight of Istanbul's vast new airport on the Black Sea Coast below.

It is not that the interior is unattractive. In any case how splendid can a terminal be? It just seems so desolate – apart from the bottles. Where there might be public art or something with a spark, there are endless shelves of duty-free gin. The most common grumble is that the distance from ticket counter to gate is like going to Tipperary via Mars, but to be honest the walk is probably not that much greater than the hike to the plane in Heathrow's Terminal 2. The really curious thing is that it all seems such a waste. Built for the gods of prosperity and progress, it seems unlikely they will ever invest in the airport's cavernous space.

In years past I have written about how pharaonic an airport larger than Manhattan with six planned runways would be. So I suppose I shouldn't complain that no matter how many flights are listed on the departure board, the acreage under the sky-high atriums seems forlorn. The theory, I suppose, is that as Istanbul becomes an even larger transit hub, the airport will start to bustle. But this, of course, assumes future generations will disregard the science of climate change and take to the skies.

The crowning irony is that once you are buckled in and the plane begins to taxi, you are shown a public-service video, the moral of which is that it is wrong to feed plastic bottles to fish. It is all part of a national Zero Waste campaign. To paraphrase Lady Macbeth, "All the green-wash of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

STRANGE THAT EVEN AS ISTANBUL begins to sprawl out towards its new airport, my own routine has become more compact. While the prospect of flying has become depressing, I find the commute to work uplifting. It involves three forms of public transport, takes just over half an hour, and the highlight is the boat ride across the Bosphorus, past the historical skyline. The ride is too short for me to become impatient but long enough to unwind.

The journey has become a ritual in which I reconnect every morning with where I live. The point struck home one day last week as I was about to board a bus, patting my pockets in vain for the Istanbul transport card I had left on the bathroom dresser. The driver spotted my consternation and waved me onto the bus without paying the fare. I am on nodding terms with the man at the boat turnstile, so I was not surprised when he also waved me through. I suppose I should have bought another card before boarding the funicular rail car that takes me up the hill from the landing station at Karaköy, but it was as much curiosity as meanness which pushed me to try my luck. "I forgot my card..." I started to explain to the security guard – and with a broad smile, he gestured me in with both hands as if I were an honoured guest.

I am not intending to freeload perpetually on the public purse but I do take some satisfaction in being able to do so three times in a single day. I am pretty sure I could not do the same in London or Berlin. If I had an explanation for such ready kindness, it is that in a city whose growth seems out of people's control, they feel a need to show solidarity to one other. Amid so much wrong, the one great right is the gracious quality of interaction between strangers. And so when my frequent-flyer card expires, as one day it must, I will still feel privileged to be on the receiving end of frequent courtesy.

THEY SAY THAT TRAVELLING BROADENS the mind, a snippet of wisdom with which I grapple, since the most frequent journey I seem to take these days is back in time. I won't burden you with memories of the old Istanbul airport of the 1960s, where a customs officer chalked a cross to clear every bag as it arrived off the conveyor belt – but I will recall the incredulous look of one official as his metal cufflinks stuck to the bag holding an industrial magnet my father was smuggling in (successfully, it turned out; the man was too startled to look inside).

I did take a plane to Antakya on the Syrian border the other day, but it took me some time to shake off memories of my first visit in 1972, when I went overland by train and bus. The date must have been July 23 since a parade was celebrating the end of the French mandate and the province's admission to Turkey. War of Independence veterans with handlebar moustaches and cartridge belts marched in step, followed by pickup trucks sporting symbols of modernity: fridges and washing machines made in Turkey.

Today's Antakya sports an equally impressive engagement with the spirit of its age – a new hotel designed by Emre Arolat showcasing the great expanses of mosaics discovered during excavation. These include a fourth-century space that is current contender for the title of the world's largest mosaic. Other marvels include a fifth-century villa whose mosaic floor depicts 72 different species of birds, as well as a second-century depiction of Pegasus surrounded by water muses – and a near-intact Roman bath.

Sabiha Asfuroğlu, a member of the family whose project the hotel is, describes the labours of Hercules needed to design a building that would do justice to its site. Some 20,000 tons of steel suspend the hotel over the historic remains – slightly less than four times what was used to raise the Eiffel Tower. The result is disconcerting – so much solid construction seems somehow less permanent than the relics it presides over.

Ms Asfuroğlu hopes to recreate the Bilbao effect, a reference to the Gehry-designed Guggenheim, which turned a backwater into a destination. Much has to happen before this occurs, including an end to the war in Syria. But there is much to see in Antakya. And it is now possible to take a trip back in time, simply by looking at the mosaics below from your hotel window. ◆

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Transports of delight

John Shakespeare Dyson relives the highlights of Istanbul's musical year, and looks forward to some of the special treats still in store on the concert calendar

This year music lovers in Istanbul have been comprehensively dunked in the Pierian Spring, the watering-hole of the Muses. There have been a few ups and downs, as is only to be expected in an art form that takes place in real time, but things started and ended well.

In April I heard the Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra in a concert with a strong Greek presence at the Caddebostan Cultural Centre. The soloist in Christos Papageorgiou's *Violin Concerto* was Olgu Kızılay, conducted with great attention to detail by Nikos Haliassas. Harpist Merve Kocabeyler gave entrancing performances of Debussy's *Danse Sacré et Danse Profane* and the Azeri composer İlyas Mirzayev's *Rainbow*. This was followed by a blast of Bizet: the two *Carmen Suites*. Like the Asian shore's burgeoning skyscrapers, the Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra continues to pursue a decidedly upward trend.

In May and June the Korean lady pianists Yeol Eum Son and Jeung Beum Sohn gave the last two concerts in the 2018–19 Istanbul Recitals series, held at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum in Emirgan. In the first, Ms Son gave us powerful renderings of Chopin's *Piano Sonata No 2*, his *Scherzo No 2* – which, judging from her pouting mouth movements, she much enjoyed – and Rachmaninov's *Thirteen Preludes*. In the second, Mr Sohn had no trouble getting into a serious Beethovenian mindset for his last piano sonata, *No 32*. The Istanbul Recitals continue to provide high-grade musical satisfaction – a Rivendell in which life's minor distractions (Brexit, earthquakes, conflict) can be temporarily forgotten.

June is the time when the watermelons, and the equally scrumptious annual İKSV Istanbul Music Festival get under way (this year's theme: *Darkness of Being, Lightness of Being*). At the opening concert we heard Mr Seong-Jin Cho (also Korean) play Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No 1* with the Tekfen Philharmonic Orchestra under Aziz Shokhakimov, whose elegant hand gestures never fail to mystify me but obviously mean a great deal to the orchestra.

At Ayairini on June 20, the renowned viola player Yuri Bashmet and the Moscow Soloists presented a work by contemporary composer Alexander Tchaikovsky that was supposed to show how much mileage you could wring out of a chord of C minor, but which I found tedious and repetitive. Worse still, Mr Bashmet seemed to have received a visitation from Messrs Brahms and Liszt. I wished I could have joined the two pigeons flying around in the vaulted roof overhead, who very sensibly escaped through a broken window. Things picked up later on, when we heard Schubert's *Death and the Maiden String Quartet* beautifully played in an arrangement for string orchestra.

At the final concert of the İKSV Festival, given by the Shanghai Philharmonic on June 30, Fazıl Say gave a performance of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No 3* that evinced an admirable combination of self-assurance and subtlety. As an encore we heard his arrangement of the Turkish song *'Üsküdara Giderken'* ('Going to Üsküdar'). It took a long time to get to Üsküdar, and the chordal diet was sparse to the point of starvation. Mr Say should really stick to Beethoven, which he plays superbly.

ALMOST WITHOUT A PAUSE, the musical Muse Euterpe did a U-turn, and the İKSV Jazz Festival ensued. On July 5 I had the privilege (and I mean that) of hearing Aydın Esen and his group with singer Randy K at UNIQ Concert Hall. Esen's performance left me gasping: almost every chord was a delight. Drummer Tommy Campbell had everyone rolling in the aisles with his plastic pigs, ducks and chickens, which he pressed to produce some visceral noises that are too rude to describe in these Parnassian pages. I left with a rare feeling of euphoria.

As summer rolled on and sprinklers on the grass verges rotated themselves into a frenzy, I visited the İş Bankası megatower in Levent to hear the Turkish Youth Philharmonic Orchestra, under their founder Cem Mansur. On offer were Weber's *Der Freischütz Overture*, Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No 2* (with the redoubtable pianist Gökhan Aybulus as soloist), a consciously cacophonous piece by the composer Füsun Köksal – her *String Quartet* is well worth listening to on YouTube – and Beethoven's *Eighth Symphony*. I hugely enjoyed this orchestra's performance, as I always do, especially their ebullient, feisty Beethoven.

In November, as CORNUCOPIA was going to press, the second of the new season's Istanbul Recitals, at The Seed, was given by the Russian pianist Nikolai Demidenko, whose chameleon-like ability to produce a new pianistic style for every piece brought me up short. What a contrast to the previous performer, Valentina Lisitsa! Where Ms Lisitsa was flamboyant, Demidenko was restrained. In spite of its discipline, his playing had an intensity that made extravagant gestures unnecessary. After Chopin, Liszt, Schubert and Scriabin, the final work on the programme was Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata No 8*, one of his three "war sonatas" – a daunting marathon in which Mr Demidenko conclusively proved he is a first-rate pianist.

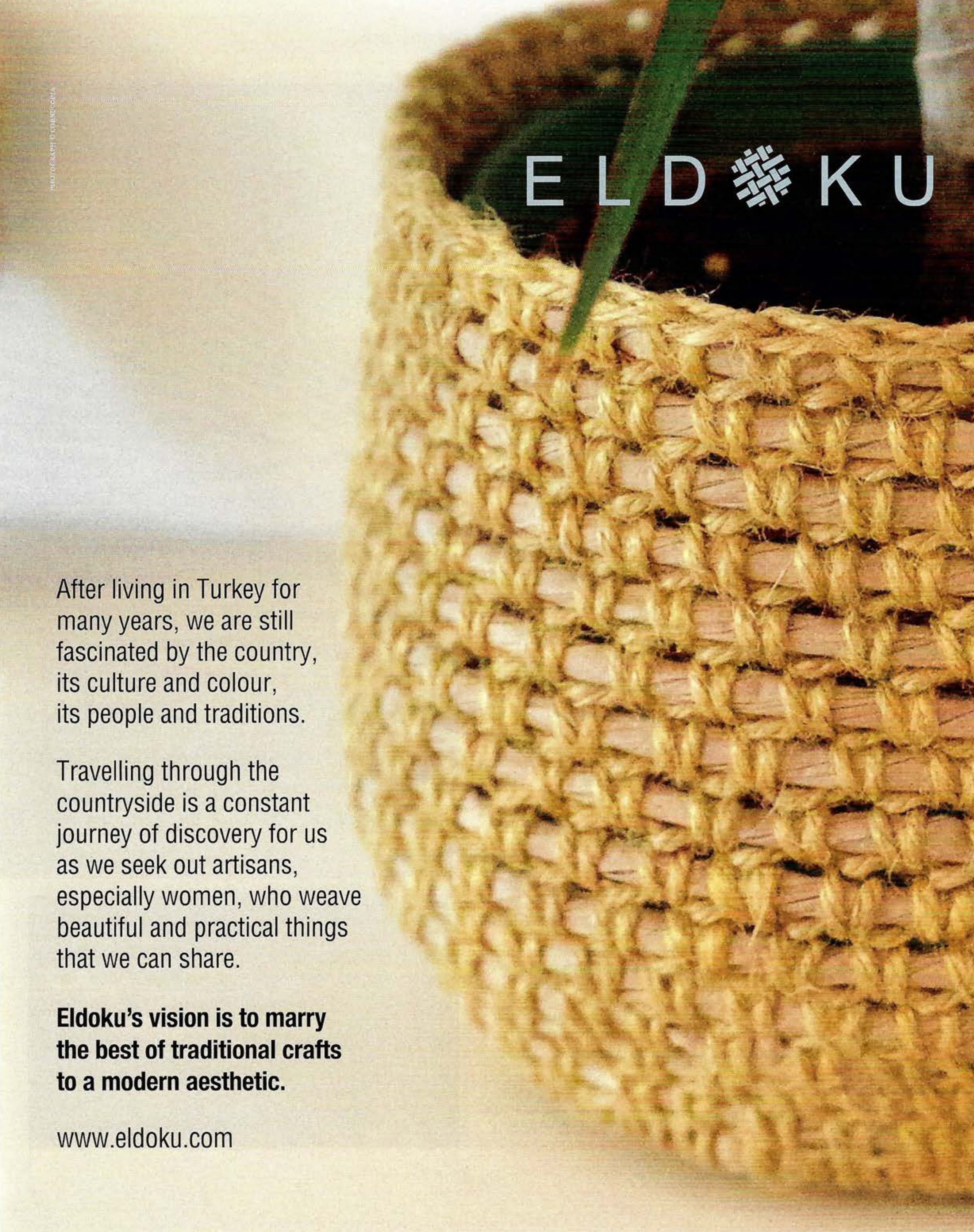
AND SO TO THE FUTURE. The Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra (BIPO) are offering a full programme for the coming season, with concerts at the Lütfi Kırdar on a good number of Thursday evenings from November to May (borusansanat.com/en/bipo_2/). On April 11 they play host to the legendary jazz pianist Chick Corea, while April 30 will be an Elgar fest.

The Istanbul Recitals continue with offerings from the cellist Alexander Chaushian on January 18, and violin-and-piano duo Soyoung Yoon and Mario Häring on February 14. The last four recitals will all be by pianists – Imogen Cooper on March 14, Barry Douglas on April 10, Christian Blackshaw on May 16 (he and I had the same piano teacher in Manchester long ago), and Momo Kodama on June 12.

I have set myself the task of going to a jazz concert at the new Arter in Dolapdere at some point in the coming season. I have also promised myself the treat of listening to the consummately professional jazz singer Sibel Köse, ace trumpeter İmer Demirer and virtuoso guitarist Sarp Maden whenever the opportunity presents itself. Forthcoming jazz sessions and classical concerts worthy of note will be announced in my blog.

In September I visited a temporarily balmy Britain. As I ate my scones and jam one day, I was gratified to see one of my familiars trying to get in on the scene – a wasp! I was most touched by the loyalty it had shown in coming all the way from Istanbul just to be with me. That reminds me of a story a friend once told me of his return to the UK after two years' residence in Turkey. When he opened his suitcase after the journey, out hopped a rather stupefied mouse. But to return to the subject at hand, the coming season promises to be one in which Istanbul's music-lovers will be transported, with their full cooperation and assent, into other worlds. ◆

For John Shakespeare Dyson's reviews see Musical Shares at cornucopia.net/blog



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After living in Turkey for many years, we are still fascinated by the country, its culture and colour, its people and traditions.

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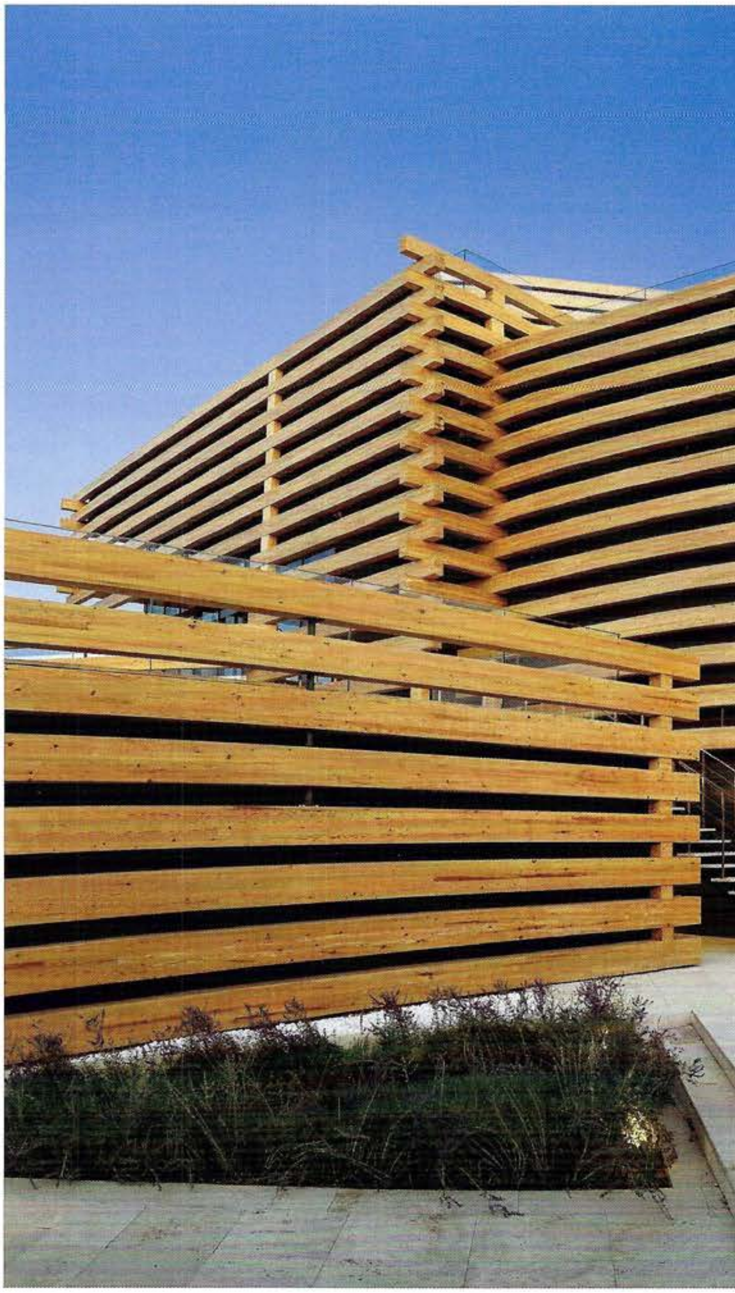
WOOD WORKS

MIDWAY BETWEEN ISTANBUL AND ANKARA, OMM IS ESKİŞEHİR'S STUNNING NEW MUSEUM BY THE VISIONARY JAPANESE ARCHITECT KENGO KUMA. THOMAS ROUECHÉ FINDS A MARVEL OF CUTTING-EDGE DESIGN THAT GIVES CONTEMPORARY ART THE PLACE IT DESERVES – IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



Homecomings are always powerful, but the homecoming of the Tabanca family to their native Eskişehir in western Anatolia has been nothing short of spectacular. Erol Tabanca is an architect whose construction company has flourished in faraway Turkmenistan, but, determined to honour his birthplace, he has endowed it with a world-class building by Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, and his associate Yuki Ikeguchi, to house his 1,000-piece trove of mainly contemporary art, confirming Eskişehir as a destination in the international art world.

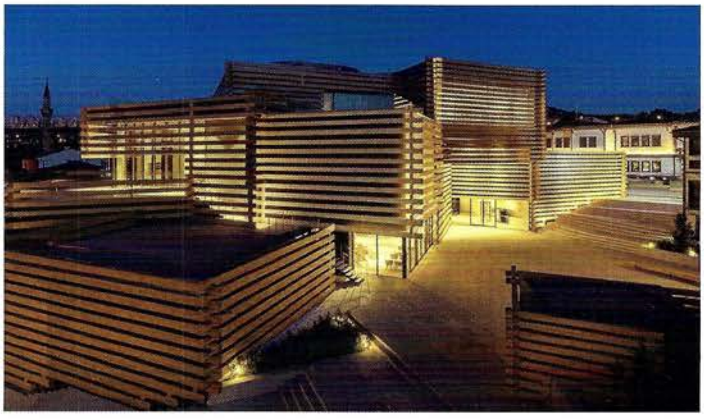
The Odunpazarı Modern Museum, or OMM, which takes its name from the historical wood-market district of Eskişehir, opened in September 2019 to display Tabanca's collection of largely but not exclusively Turkish works by a "Who's Who" of artists, from Erol Akyavaş to İnci Eviner. "It is his way of giving back to the community," says his daughter, İdil, who has come back from New York – where she edited *Bullett* magazine – to supervise the growth of a young, ambitious institution.

MONICA FRITZ

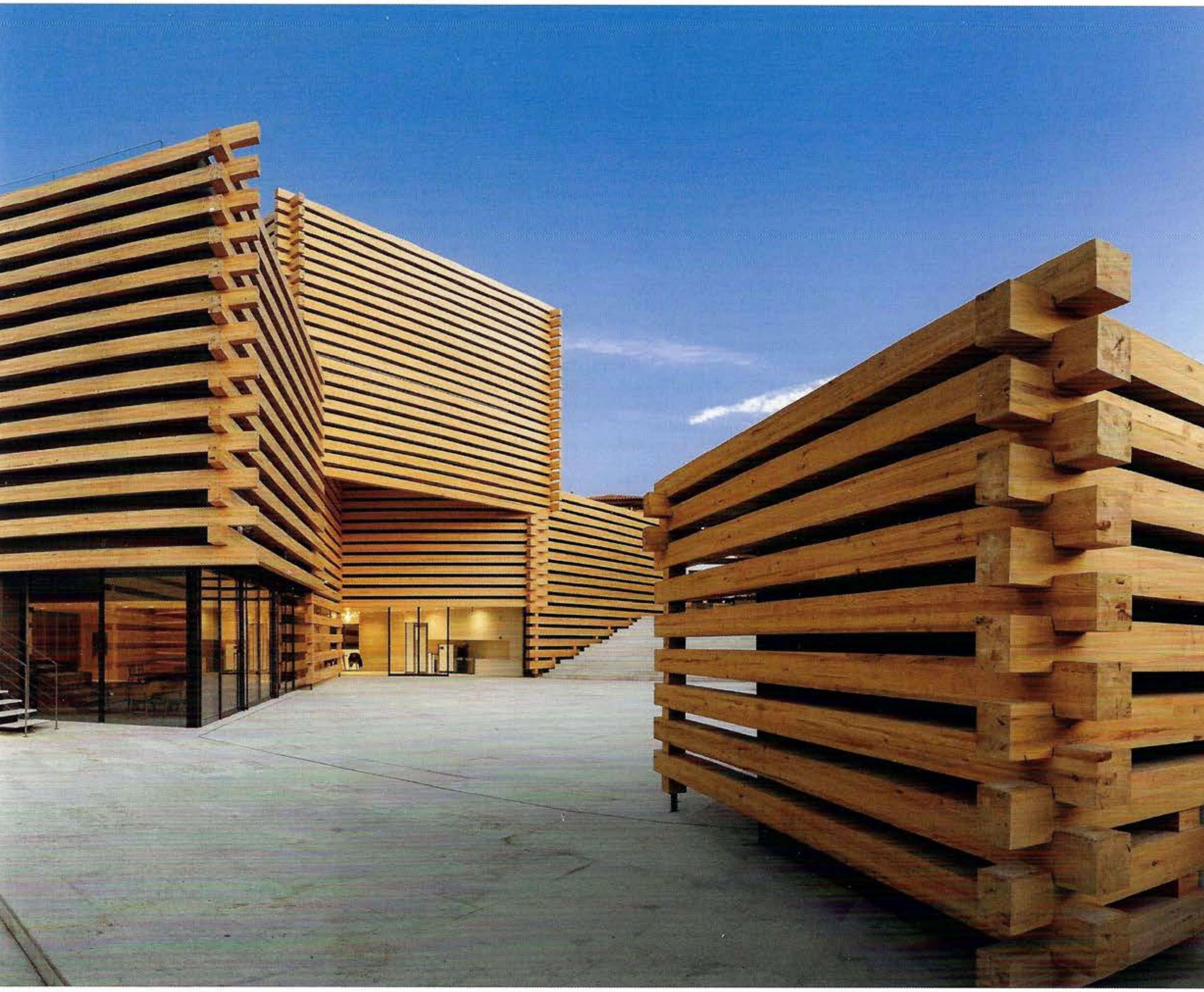
İdil Tabanca cut her teeth as editor-in-chief of the downtown New York magazine *Bullett* before returning to her home town to curate OMM

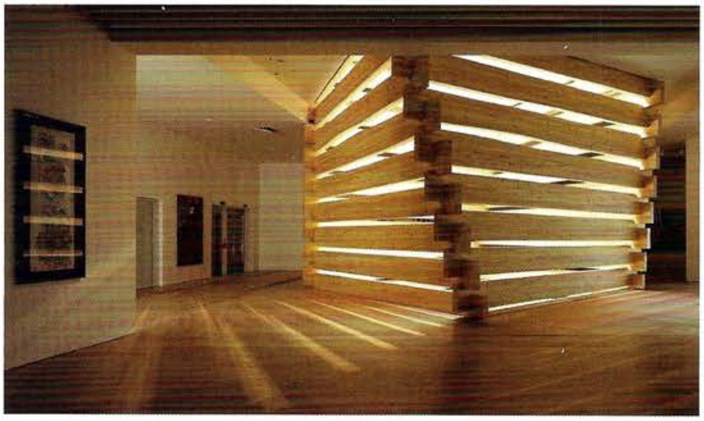
Bringing something new to Eskişehir, a university town on the high-speed train route between Istanbul and Ankara, is also a matter of respecting what is already there. There are plans for community outreach, for travelling exhibitions, and residency programmes to bring artists from abroad. At the same time, the museum is achingly contemporary, breaking new ground for institutions in Turkey and the region in its wholehearted embrace of virtual-reality artworks and interdisciplinary art, and its striking architecture.

Contrast Kuma Associates' building with Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao, which though credited with turning a little-visited city into a tourist hub, can feel as connected as a starship refuelling for its journey to Mars. The Guggenheim says more about the Gehry brand than it does about the institution's relationship to the Basque region of Spain. Gehry himself was aware of the dangers of "starchitecture". "I went over the hill and saw it shining there. I thought, 'What the fuck have I done to these people?'" he famously said ahead of the Guggenheim's opening in 1997. It didn't have to be that way. OMM, built out of what look like giant Jenga blocks, offers a masterclass in



PHOTOGRAPHS: BATUHAN KESKİNER





Above The golden beams of Kengo Kuma's Odunpazarı Modern Museum. The cantilevered walls and interlocking blocks were inspired by the traditional wooden houses of the district. Kuma's next project is the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense, Denmark

Left A square atrium at the centre of the building twists gently as it rises through three floors, allowing natural light to filter into the galleries

Far left The museum at night

Left Only in Eskişehir! OMM's staff wear bright red futuristic costumes designed by Dilara Fındıkoğlu. For her, the museum is a space station, a rocket ship that could only ever be built, handcrafted even, in Eskişehir how a cutting-edge museum can engage with its environment without sacrificing the vision of its designer. In Kengo Kuma, OMM has found an architect who understands how, in a world of globalisation, locality is more important than ever.

The golden beams of Kuma's structure weave the building softly into Eskisehir's old town, echoing the traditional architecture. Inside, the spaces are remarkable and transformative; outside, new public spaces emerge. The building spirals around an atrium through which natural light cascades. Kuma has often spoken of his work as a reaction against the concrete and glass of the *style international*, which he sees as severing the connection between man and nature. At OMM the overall effect is one of warmth and compatibility, lending an organic sense of affinity and balance so rare in contemporary museum buildings. Kuma has been prolific in his native Japan, and designed the stadium for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, but he also designed the V&A Dundee design museum, which opened in September 2018. His buildings harmonise materials and context, establishing a sense of place.

I stroll through Eskişehir's historic downtown in early September, to see it gilded in the dappled light, peppers hung out to dry from the windows of traditional Ottoman wooden houses. The streets are tree-lined and verdant. This is a unique city in Turkey, and in many ways a fitting location for a forward-thinking institution such as OMM. Home to excellent universities, it has a thriving community of students and a youthful atmosphere that contrasts with its three millennia of history. It is known for its canals and canal boats, trams and cycle lanes, the result of the municipality's long-standing progressive bent, and hosts an important film festival. It deserves to be celebrated, and it deserves OMM.

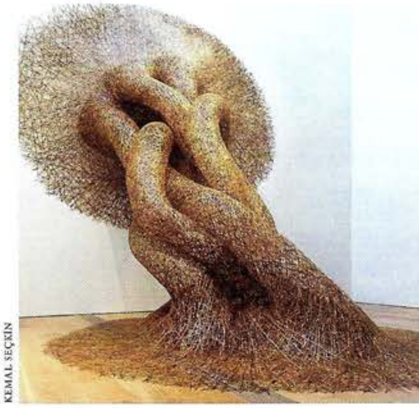
Kuma's architecture manages to be both understated and revelatory. Twisting and spiralling spaces provoke emotional responses, complementing and heightening the experiential aspects of OMM. The museum, under İdil Tabanca's guidance, embraces a wide range of technological augmentations – from VR artworks to responsive projections.

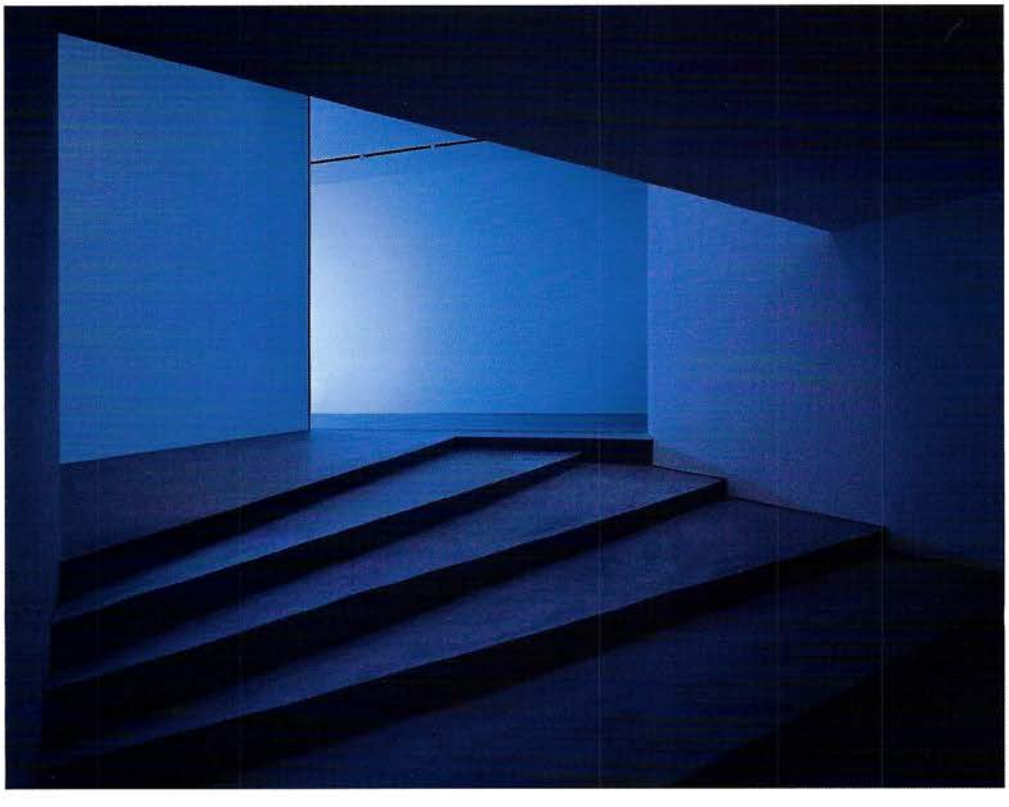
The playful and experimental ethos extends to the staff uniforms, designed by Dilara Fındıkoğlu, which draw inspiration from the historically matriarchal cultures of Anatolia, while adding a futuristic twist.

"So much about new museum architecture relies on the façade," says Haldun Dostoğlu, who curated the opening exhibition. OMM bucks the trend. It is all about the discovery of interiors. Far from offering a series of "white cube" galleries, Kuma's building creates contexts that force one to reconsider the artwork. In particular the work of Nuri İyem, Nejat Melih Devrim and Armen Gevorgian feel empowered by their surroundings – elevated into a new contemporary relevance.

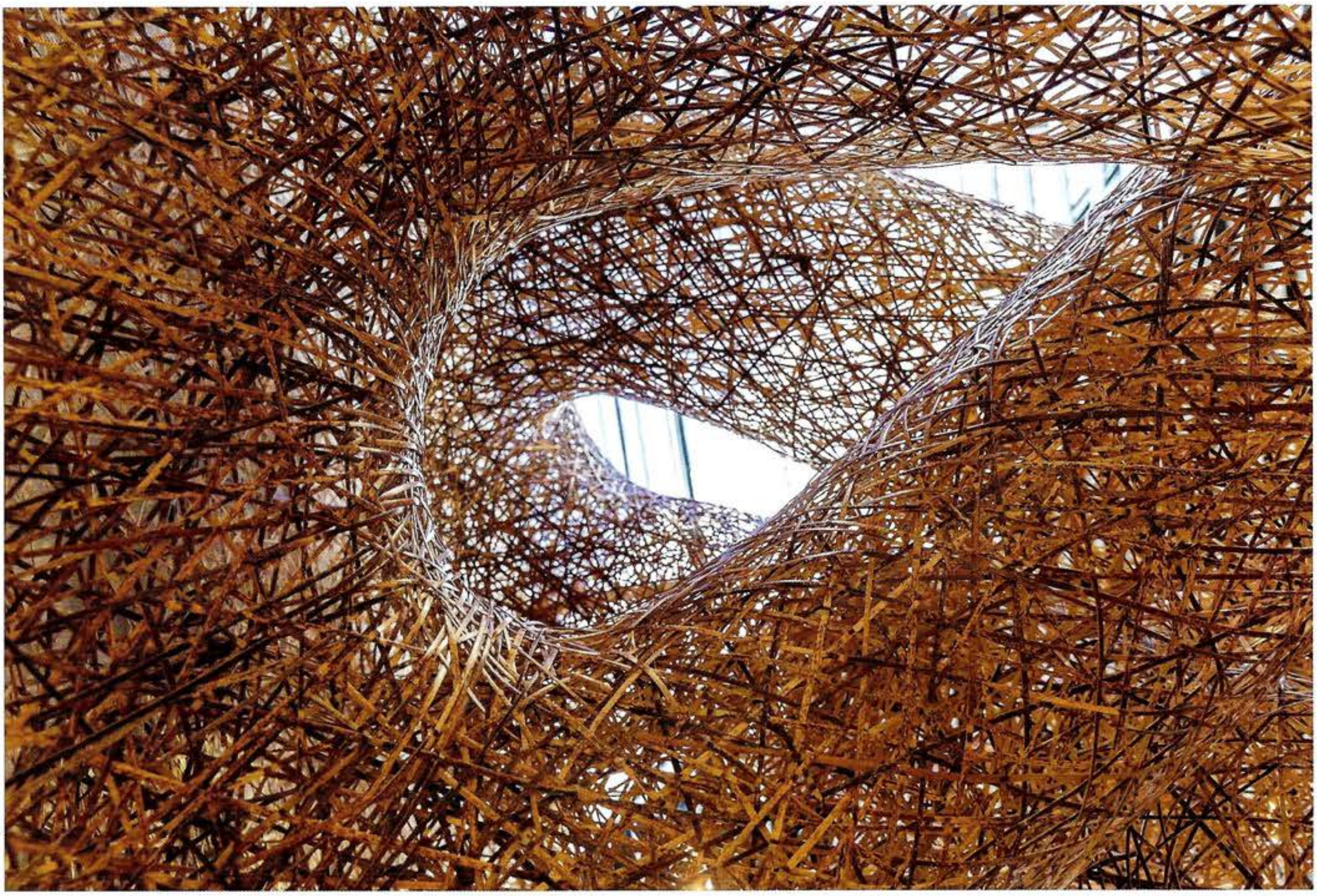
The most spectacular example is the bamboo installation of Tanabe Chikuunsai IV. This inhabits the tallest hall – ten metres high. It is a woven organism that spreads and grows into the space, seeming at once something from another place, another culture, and yet completely in its element. A similarly ingenious example is a pair of large-scale virtual-reality installations by Marshmallow Laser Feast. The works, titled *In The Eyes of the Animal* and *Treehugger*, take their audience into a digital forest, in the former sharing the experience of flying animals; in the latter documenting rare and endangered trees. Combining drone footage with virtual reality, the installation provokes museum-goers to consider their connection to the natural world.

The work is at once avant-garde, technologically bleeding-edge and environmentally committed, placing OMM far beyond its status as a "regional museum", thrusting it into an international discussion about climate change and the responsibility of artists and art institutions to engage the public. It is here that we best see hints of what is to come in OMM's programming: progressive, engaged and intelligent works that push boundaries technologically and artistically.


KEMAL SEÇKIN


BATUHAN KESKINER

OMM can succeed where the Guggenheim Bilbao still labours, in drawing visitors not to gawk but to join in the community. In the same way as Kuma's spiralling building responds delicately to the cultural and environmental situation of Eskişehir, İdil Tabanca has worked hard to make the presentation of the museum's collection engage with its surroundings, while striving to make the building as sustainable as possible. This ecological thinking spins out into the wider sphere, offering a completely new



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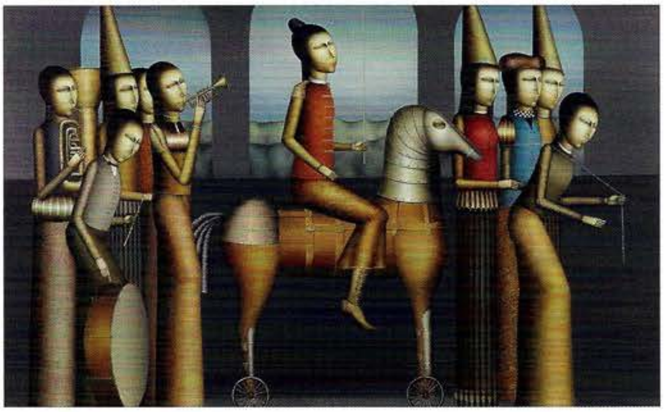

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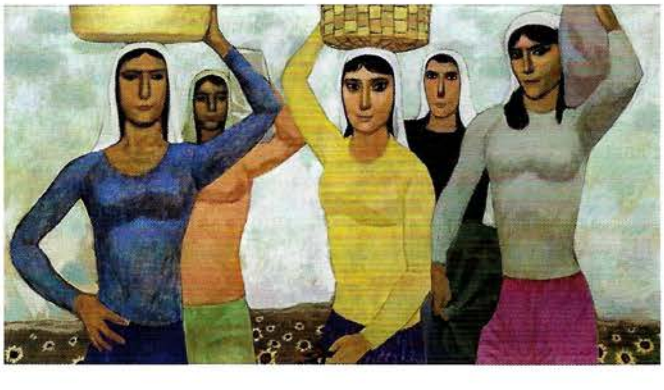

KAYHAN KAYGUSUZ

Above and opposite, top A giant installation of intricately woven bamboo, 5 by 8 metres in size, created in situ by Tanabe Chikuunsai IV, a member of a revered Japanese family of bamboo craft artists. When the work, a site-specific commission, is dismantled, 95 per cent of the tiger-bamboo tubes will be used again in Chikuunsai's next project **Left** *The Parade*, by Armen Gevorgian (2014) **Below** *Women Working the Fields*, by Nuri İyem (2008). Both works from the Tabanca collection suddenly found a whole new relevance in Kuma's museum **Opposite, bottom** The museum is full of intimate interior spaces, with the smaller galleries clustered round the atrium on the lower floors

model for art institutions in Turkey and beyond.

If Eskişehir has, for some, offered a vision of a different, progressive reality for Turkey, it now has an institution to match, which embodies this enlightened contrarianism and can communicate this identity on a global stage.

It has a chance to become a home for new ideas affecting the rest of the country. Certainly OMM will bring waves of tourists to a city that has hitherto been relatively unknown. However, the real achievement here is the almost seamless and organic weaving of such a remarkable institution into the urban fabric of one of Turkey's most charming cities. ◆

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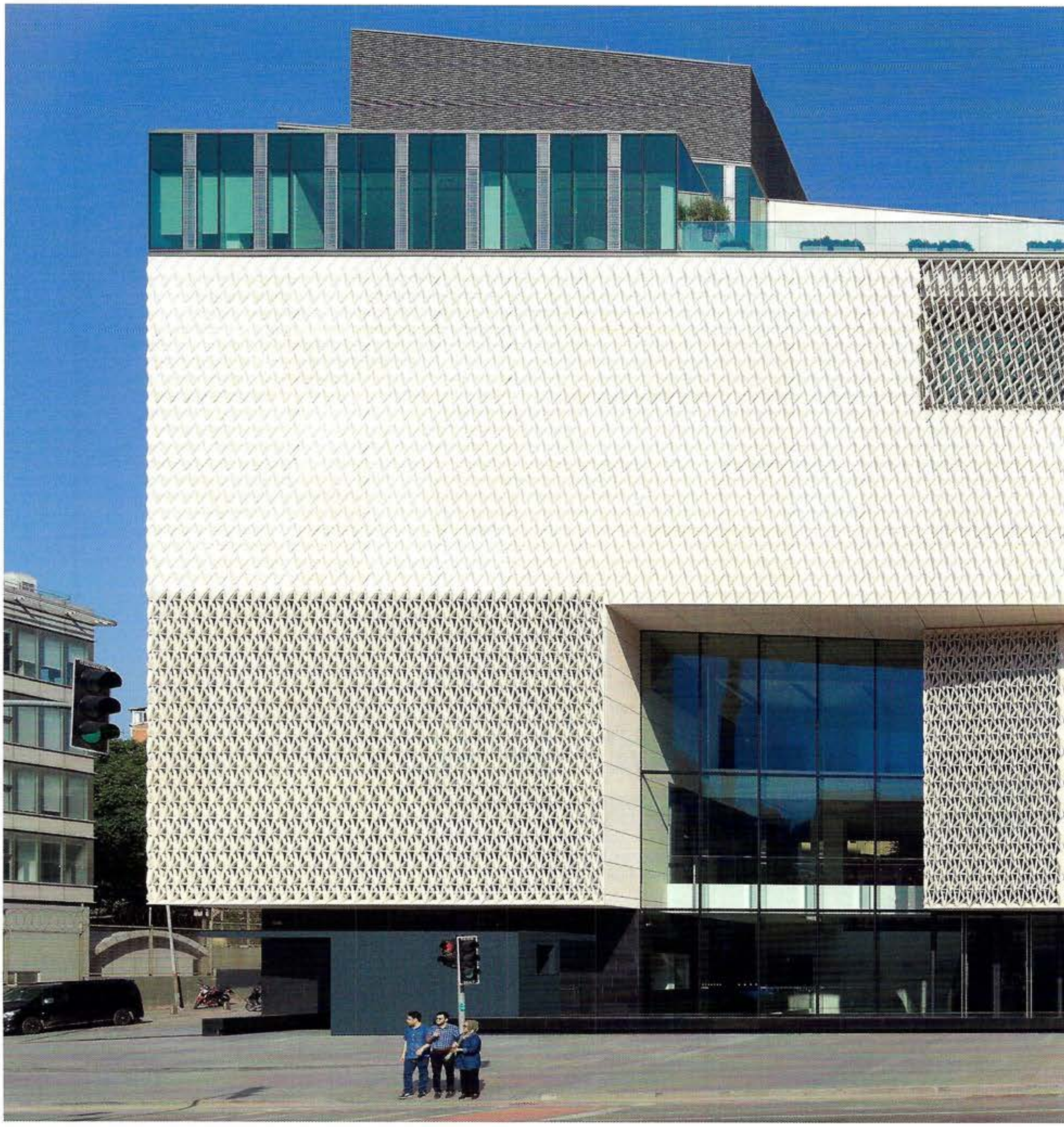


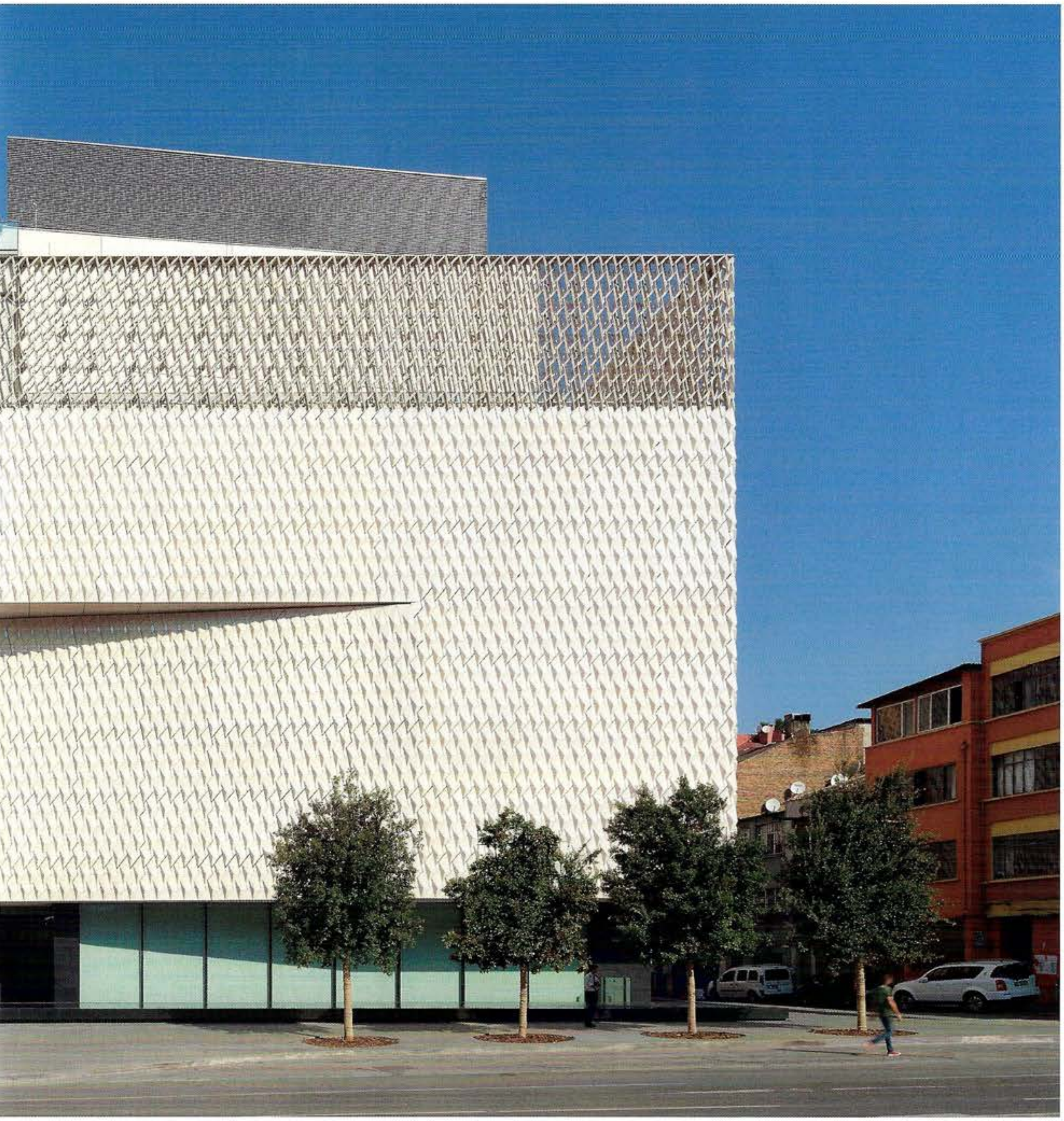
ARTER-TEXTURE

CONCEPTUAL ART HAS A VIBRANT NEW HOME IN ISTANBUL. ANDREW FINKEL MEETS THE DRIVING

Ambushed is not the right word, but not for the first time have I sat down with Melih Fereli to find myself being spun round and round, and reeling off in an unexpected direction. Melih, 71, is a master of surprise, as you would expect of a man who once held down a day job with a manufacturer of car batteries, and at night put on his symphony chorister's hat. Those of us who waited patiently for the opening, in September 2019, of the newly inaugurated Arter should have known to expect the unexpected. But when Melih says with quiet confidence that what happens at Arter will not be merely world class, but will force the world to sit up and take notice, I start to feel a touch light-headed.

I have managed to bag an hour of Melih's time at the newly inaugurated Arter, where he serves as founding director. It would be wrong to call this a museum, and not just because, in Turkey, that is a rigid legal designation. Rather it is a space designed to make art happen. It was founded at his urging in 2005, when he was first engaged as an adviser to the Vehbi Koç Foundation, to put into practice the Foundation's interest (and that of a board member, Ömer Koç) in contemporary art, and a new arts space opened in 2010 on İstiklâl Caddesi, as a testing ground for future expansion.

After nine years of having a front window on Istanbul's Beyoğlu thoroughfare it made the much-heralded move to a



Sci-fi meets art at Arter. Light filters through the façade of the new Arter to bring to life six floors of gallery. Begun in 2015, the museum took four years to finish. The wall, a nod to international Islamic design, combines handmade ceramic tiles with 3D convex and concave rhomboid panels to create constantly changing reflections as the sun moves round

CEMAL EMDEN

FORCE BEHIND IT, AND, OVERLEAF, THOMAS ROUECHÉ TAKES A TOUR

purpose-built edifice in the working-class neighbourhood of Dolapdere. Although described as "transparent", it is very much its own universe, an array of interconnecting boxes with endless, flexible space, state-of-the-art theatres and a sculpture terrace. It is the work of the London-based Grimshaw Architects and, while covered in tessellated white tiles, is clearly intended to impress with its functionality rather than its façade – more high-tech than high temple.

Melih sees Arter as a sanctuary for the unconventional, a place for research, an archive and above all a site of artistic production across every discipline from music to dance, theatre to sonic arts, film to literature. "I don't want to sound big-headed," he told one interviewer, "but I imagined an institution that would become a game changer."

I have known Melih long enough to take him seriously. Cornucopia ran an interview with him in 1994, the year after he was summoned from London, where he had served as a director of the diesel division of Lucas Industries from 1973 to 1985 (moonlighting as a tenor and, later, board member of the Philharmonia Chorus), to become the new head of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts.

The challenge of putting the Istanbul festivals back on their feet at a time when Turkey was in deep financial crisis is visible in the photo of him taken by the late Ara Güler. His eyes are deep in shadow and the smile… well, it is as if one of

Edvard Munch's models was relaxing after a scream.

"A terrible picture," today's much brighter-looking Melih remembers. He is one of the few septuagenarians I know capable of an engaging giggle. But he kept his word and repositioned Istanbul on the cultural map. The first thing was to postpone the Art Biennial until 1995 – not just to give the economy time to recover but to allow Istanbul to compete with Venice head to head. "They had the bigger budget, but we were more interesting," he says.

What might seem elitist to some was his belief that his fellow citizens deserved to experience the very best. Thanks in no small way to Melih Fereli, I watched Ian Holm as King Lear and saw Valery Gergiev conduct the Kirov's version of *Parsifal*. Twenty years before Kara Walker came to the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern she was displayed in Istanbul's Aya Irini. My own life in Istanbul, and those of so many others, became so much richer. And he seems determined to do something wonderful all over again.

In 2007 Melih helped start the VKF's collection of both Turkish and non-Turkish art. He sees it less as a catalogue of the post-1960 canon than as a toolbox from which curators can develop themed exhibitions, supplemented by new and specially commissioned work. If he has a manifesto it is to make art and artists accessible to the community, to encourage those who enter through Arter's doors to discover their own creativity and to value the creativity of others.

MONICA FRITZ

But of course this is not something that happens all by itself. At one point he lets drop that he arrives at the office at 7.30 every morning. "I don't expect everyone else to do the same," he says, and I wonder if he means it.

It is not a particularly lavish office. It is hard not to be distracted by his collection of rubber ducks, including one resembling the Queen, who awarded him an OBE in 1998 for services to British-Turkish cultural relations. Equally arresting is a composition on the wall by Dick Higgins, a founder of the Fluxus movement. It is called *Albumblatt* and is a piece of musicality represented by directional arrows. Melih Fereli is a musician, from the world of performance, after all. Across from his desk is a canvas by the Burmese artist Aung Myint, part of his *World Series: Five Continents Filled with Errors* – an abstract Mercator projection of the world patched up with red and black crosses and very difficult to delete from the mind's eye. It is simple, but at the same time the biggest of big pictures.

One of the inaugural exhibitions at Arter is of the Turkish artist Altan Gürman, and includes a collage of a soldier, his back turned, beside a cutout of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The scale and subject matter of Gürman's work jarred with his times and he was largely ignored by his more conventional peers. More than 40 years after his premature death, Arter rescues him from a shallow grave and presents him to a new generation. Melih allows himself another smile when Gürman's name comes up – this time of pride.

I had arrived at Arter expecting to admire the great and the good, to wander through galleries of art and be impressed. But there is more to creativity than that. My advice is go to Arter, get there early and get to work.

FLU FOTO

MONICA FRITZ

A VOYAGE THROUGH ARTER SPACE

By Thomas Roueché

On the top floor of the new Arter building in Dolapdere a television flickers behind a pane of frosted glass. The work, *Frosted Glass* by the artist Deniz Gül, is the first in the exhibition *Saat Kaç (What Time Is It?)*, one of seven inaugural shows with which the exhibition space has opened. In the cavernous white halls of an institution already being referred to as "Istanbul's MoMA", Gül's is an unexpectedly intimate work. The glass echoes the internal doors of a traditional apartment, nodding to the shifting boundaries of personal and communal space.

In avoiding the "museum" designation Arter allows itself a lightness of touch and a sense of flexibility. Architecturally the galleries bleed into each other. Their shows, drawn from the Arter collection, will rotate. As an institution, Arter's central claim is, first and foremost, that conceptual art has an important history in Turkey – one that deserves respect and dignity and has been for too long neglected.

The reality is that few institutions in Istanbul have given space to the generations of artists who, since the 1970s, engaged with conceptual art in anything like the detail and depth of the Arter Foundation. Arter is well known for its commissions of younger artists and its collection of the rapidly disappearing work of older artists. As such it has served as much as a valuable archive as a museum.

Furthermore Arter gives a broader framework to the series of iconic conceptual Turkish works that it owns – placing

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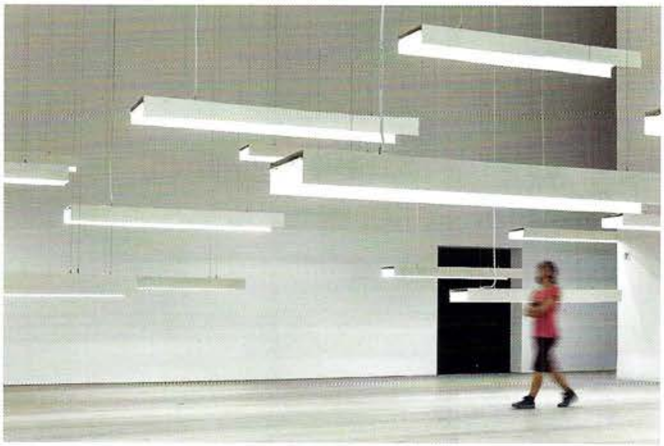
Opposite, top King Arter. For Melih Fereli the new arts hub is a dream come true. First announced in 2013, it was to open in 2016, but the project was delayed, snarled up in red tape
Opposite, bottom Ayşe Erkman's *Blue Stone* (2019). A slab of rock excavated when the foundations were laid rests on planks of laminated glass looking out on a distinctly ephemeral urban landscape
Top Arter's light-flooded interior
Above Barış Doğrusöz, *Interstices, a dizzying array of combinations* (2018) – 47 wall-mounted sculptures made from balsa wood painted in black that accentuate Arter's own geometry

them in dialogue with works from Fluxus, or artists such as Joseph Beuys, Sigmar Polke and Vito Acconci. At the centre of the building stands a library, open to visitors, which contains books and materials related to the show itself. Arter thus takes seriously its pedagogical role, telling a story of Turkish art that, until today, has rarely had the space in which to be told.

The development of a conceptual-art tradition in Turkey was linked to the opening, in 1976, of the Maçka Sanat Galerisi by the sisters Varlık Sadıkoğlu and Rabia Çapa. Far from being a white-cube space, the gallery's walls and floor were covered with ivory tiles. Here, from the 1980s onwards, were hosted Turkey's first exhibitions of conceptual art. These included the works of some of Istanbul's most important artists – Sarkis, Füsun Onur, Ayşe Erkmen and Şükran Moral, among many others – as well as artists such as Daniel Buren and François Morellet. Maçka Sanat offers an important lesson in how a space – thoughtfully and delicately conceived – can shape the wider evolution of artistic practice. Walking through the galleries of Arter one is constantly aware of the debt to Maçka Sanat, its influence and the support it offered to a generation of artists, much of whose work finds itself in the Arter collection today.

Of the seven exhibitions with which Arter has opened, *Saat Kaç* is the largest and most ambitious. A meditation on time, memory and place, it gathers together works from the Arter collection, including a number of iconic pieces well known to students of Turkish contemporary art. It is perhaps in this exhibition, which plays with the notion of canon, of time and memory, that one gains the best sense of Arter's curatorial approach. Works by Füsun Onur, in particular *Icons of Time*, speak to a sense of loss and of entropy. Onur, one of Turkey's most important and pioneering conceptual artists, famously discarded many of the works she made earlier in her career; here we see the importance of Arter's role in preserving these vital fragments of Turkey's cultural heritage.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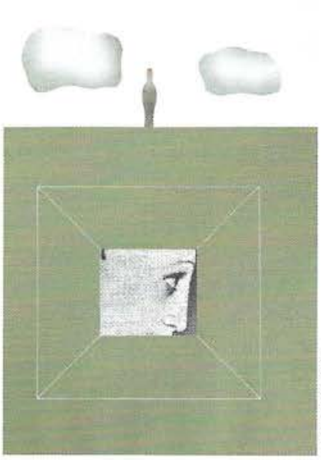
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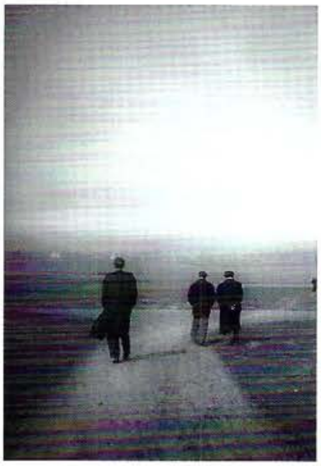
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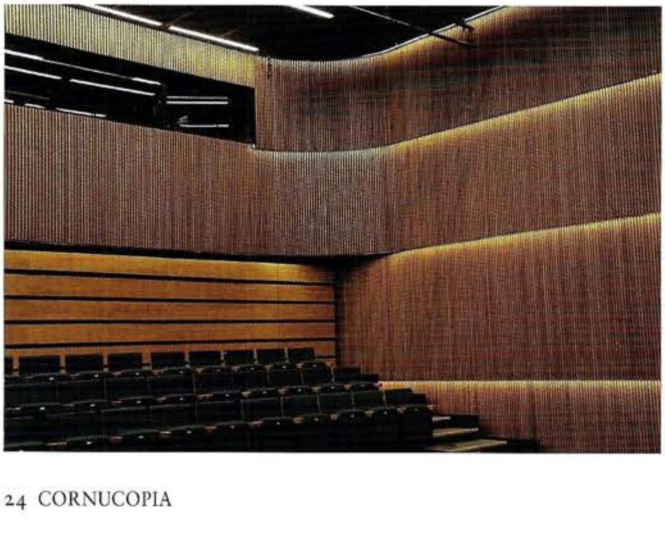
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Top Ayşe Erkmen walks through her lighting installation, *Das Haus* (1993), which featured in *Whitish*, her 2019 exhibition at Arter

Above left *The Dream of Neo-Classicism* (1975), one of the last works by Altan Gürman, a pioneer of Turkish conceptual art who died the following year aged 41. The Arter Collection acquired the collage from the artist's widow

Above right *Kassell/Mattenberg, Displaced Persons' Camp, 1947* (1975), a photograph by Jonas Mekas's brother Adolfas, reprinted by Jonas in 2017 shortly before his death. The Lithuanian brothers spent time in Nazi forced labour camps, then in displaced persons' camps in post-war Germany. Jonas (centre) walks with the poet Leonas Letas. The novelist Algirdas Landsbergis follows

Left The Sevgi Gönül Auditorium launched its film programme with a Jonas Mekas retrospective

The exhibition also includes the Armenian artist Sarkis's seminal work *Çaylak Sokak*. The installation was first shown in Maçka Sanat in 1986, and marked the Paris-based, Istanbul-born artist's return to the city. It takes its name from the street on which Sarkis grew up, and is a delicate monument to memory, place and the passage of time. Sculptures, made of audio tape taken from Tarkovsky's 1983 film *Nostalghia*, are ruffled by the breeze from large ceiling fans. Around them are a series of Sarkis's "icons". The work was included in the iconic *Magiciens de la Terre* show at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1989, for which Sarkis added the floor plan of the Maçka Sanat Gallerisi in the form of a raised wooden platforms on wheels. This is the version that sits within the Arter show.

Elsewhere, works by Nil Yalter and Cevdet Erek sit alongside Nam June Paik in commenting directly on the experience of the passage of time, of change and history. Erek's *Father's Timeline* (2008) is an important and touching commentary on the personal experience of the passage of history. Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin's deeply evocative work *Capacity*, a wall of images of hotels named after different locations in the world, is a rumination on place and time. Seza Paker's small, intimate works convey a more gentle, softer effect.

Arter's location in the heart of Dolapdere affords the building striking views over the working-class neighbourhoods that surround it. On the top-floor terrace Gülsün Karamustafa's work *Mystic Transport* is an installation of movable baskets, each containing a brightly coloured bedspread. The juxtaposition of this work, which speaks so poignantly of the movement of peoples and of homes, with the buildings beyond nods towards a mission to engage with the local community.

Perhaps the most dramatic work included in the show is Hale Tenger's *We didn't go outside; we were always on the outside/ We didn't go inside; we were always on the inside* (1995–2015). In this installation an old wooden guardhouse is surrounded by barbed wire. From the outside the work is harsh, even intimidating, but the cabin's interior is surprisingly intimate: a radio plays, a glass of tea sits half-drunk, and the walls are hung with pictures of waterfalls and landscapes. There is a strange sense of expectancy as the gallery's surroundings disappear, the absence of an inhabitant made all the stranger by the viewer's own isolation.

A video work and a series of photographs by the late Jonas Mekas are also included. In October Arter hosted a season of Mekas's films in its cinema. Mekas, a legend in the world of avant-garde cinema, died in January 2019, aged 97. His career spanned collaboration with Warhol, Dali and John Lennon, as well as obscenity charges for screening films by Jean Genet and Jack Smit, founding New York's Anthology Film Archives, and teaching the children of John and Jackie Kennedy to use a movie camera. His life, however, began in Lithuania, from where he fled in the 1940s, and his photographs and films capture the migration of peoples in the aftermath of the war – vivid memories that remain, it is strange to think, just a lifetime away.

The other exhibitions at Arter give a similarly lucid vision of the enterprise's aims. A retrospective of the forgotten artist Altan Gürman restores prominence to an important figure in Turkey's contemporary art history. Gürman, who taught for many years at the Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts, was a prolific artist whose work was kept by his wife following his untimely death in 1976, aged 41.

The large Ayşe Erkmen show, *Whitish*, similarly has the feeling of correcting an imbalance: while Erkmen is one of this country's most prominent artists, this is her first institutional solo exhibition in Turkey.

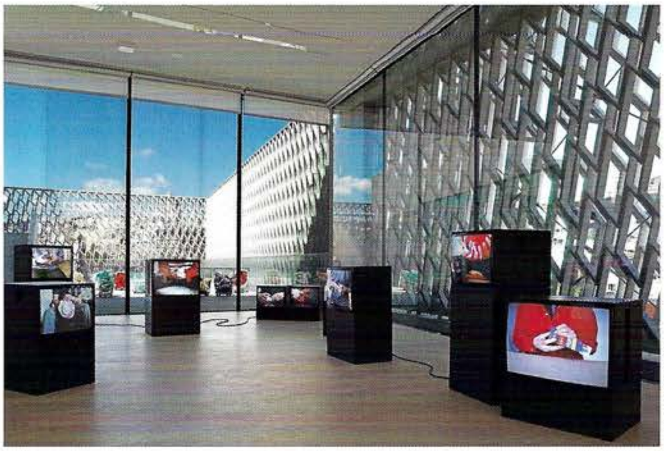
On the ground floor *Words Are Very Unnecessary* brings together a variety of artists – local and international – to continue Arter's engagement with questions around the very nature of a museum. Works by Vito Acconci, Leylâ Gediz, Sophie Calle and Ali Kazma, among others, explore the idea of the remains, traces and intangibility of an institution's collection. This exploration of the delicacy of the artwork in the context of a museum focuses on the mundane and familiar rather than the grandiose and spectacular – a quality that is marked throughout Arter's collection, which prioritises ideas, thought and consideration over flashy sensationalism.

Despite – or perhaps because of – this intellectual approach, Arter offers an embarrassment of riches. The visitor is constantly reminded of the very real need to which it is responding. It is extraordinary that no similar space existed before. The institution feels definitive, while eschewing claims to comprehensiveness.

The Arter Foundation's awareness of its role within the wider ecosystem of Turkish contemporary art is palpable. Any new venture of this type, ultimately, will be judged in the long term, yet the shows with which it has opened create a sense of excitement and anticipation. Already it has galvanised fresh energy in the city. A decade's hard work conceptualising the sort of institution that Istanbul needs has made Arter a remarkably thoughtful endeavour. It is a thrill to consider what the next decade will bring. ◆

Arter *Irmak Cad 13, Dolapdere,*
Beyoğlu, Istanbul
Tues–Sun 11–7, Thurs 11–8,
first Sat of the month 11–12
+90 212 708 5800, arter.org.tr

Continuous shuttle services run between Arter and the Pera Museum in Tepebaşı and the Gezi Park exit of the metro station in Taksim Square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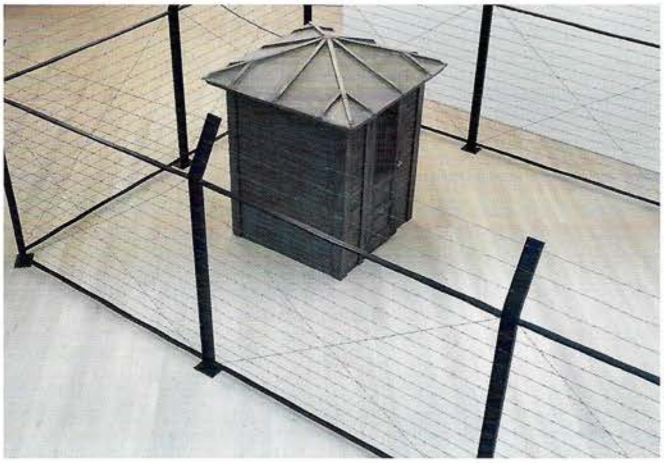
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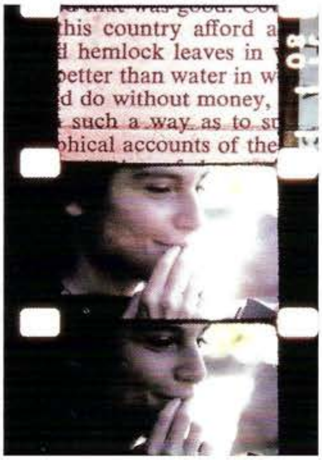
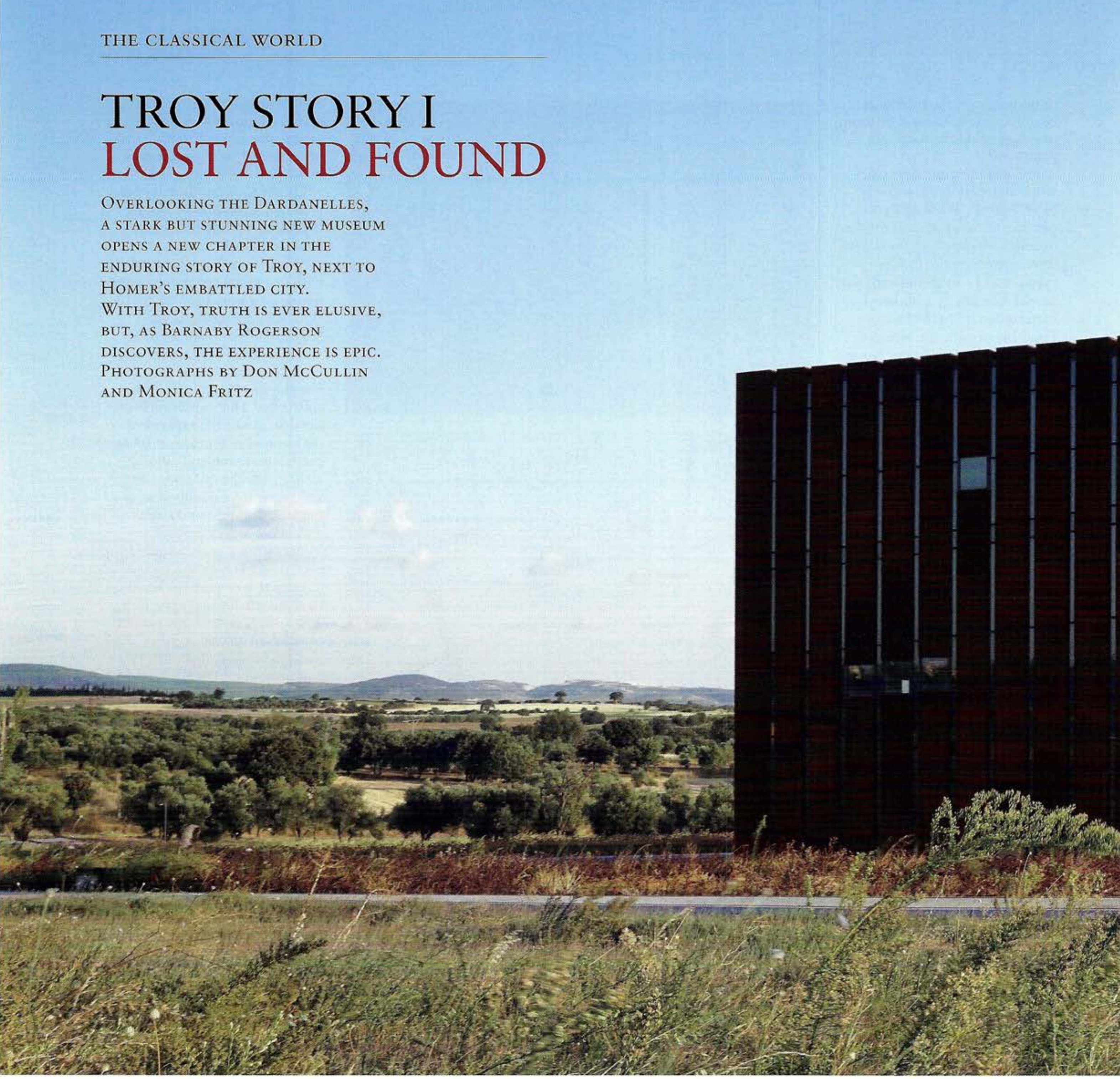


Top Eric Hattan's *Unplugged Series*, videos made between 1999 and 2005 as far apart as Reykjavik and Istanbul. On the terrace is Gülsün Karamustafa's *Mystic Transport* (1992) – colourful bedspreads in 20 metal baskets on wheels **Centre** The wooden cabin in Hale Tenger's *We didn't go outside; we were always on the outside/ We didn't go inside; we were always on the inside* (1995–2015) **Above left** *Walden*, originally called *Diaries, Notes and Sketches*, an experimental film made in America by Jonas Mekas (1968) **Above right** In the first of Arter's Young Musicians on World Stages series, Naz İrem Türkmen, aged 13, performed in October 2019 with fellow prodigy the 15-year-old pianist Maximilian Cem Haberstock

TROY STORY I
LOST AND FOUND

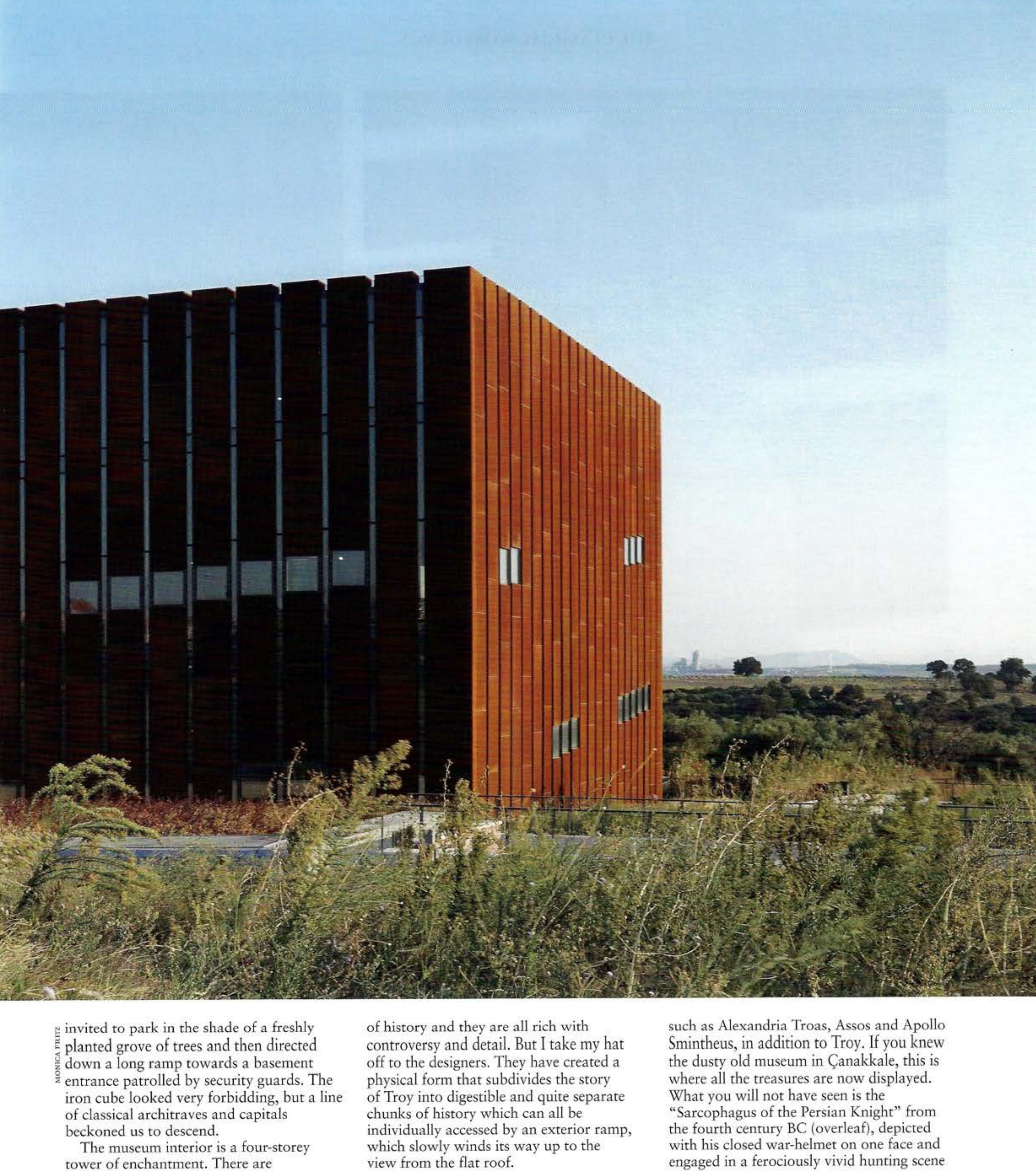
OVERLOOKING THE DARDANELLES, A STARK BUT STUNNING NEW MUSEUM OPENS A NEW CHAPTER IN THE ENDURING STORY OF TROY, NEXT TO HOMER'S EMBATTLED CITY. WITH TROY, TRUTH IS EVER ELUSIVE, BUT, AS BARNABY ROGERSON DISCOVERS, THE EXPERIENCE IS EPIC. PHOTOGRAPHS BY DON MCCULLIN AND MONICA FRITZ



Above Glowing in the evening sunlight, the new Troy Museum stands tall above the plain. The prizewinning design, by Ömer Selçuk Baz's Yalın Architects, uses Corten steel panels, which weather to a vibrant rust-like appearance **Right** A long ramp leads to the underground entrance

BERRİN TOROLSAN

The new museum of Troy is a surprising wonder, a giant cube of rusting iron. I was fortunate that on my first visit I knew absolutely nothing about it, which gave it a mysterious impact. We had drifted down an interesting-looking driveway (dotted with sarcophagi in an invitingly come-hither way) below the village of Hisarlık. I was trying to look authoritative, as I was showing my elder brother around Troy, and thought that this must be the new entrance to the site. We were



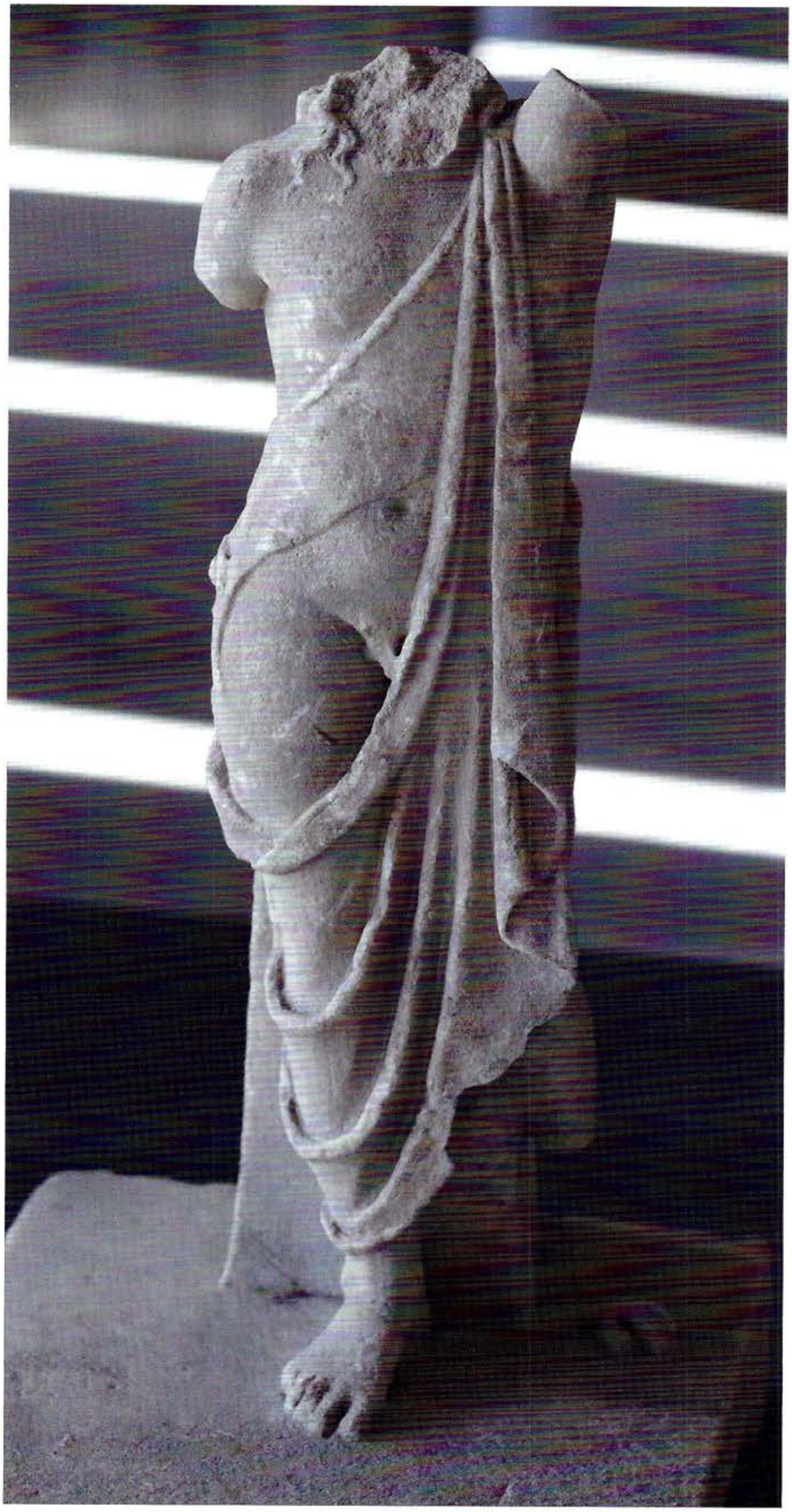
MONICA FRITZ

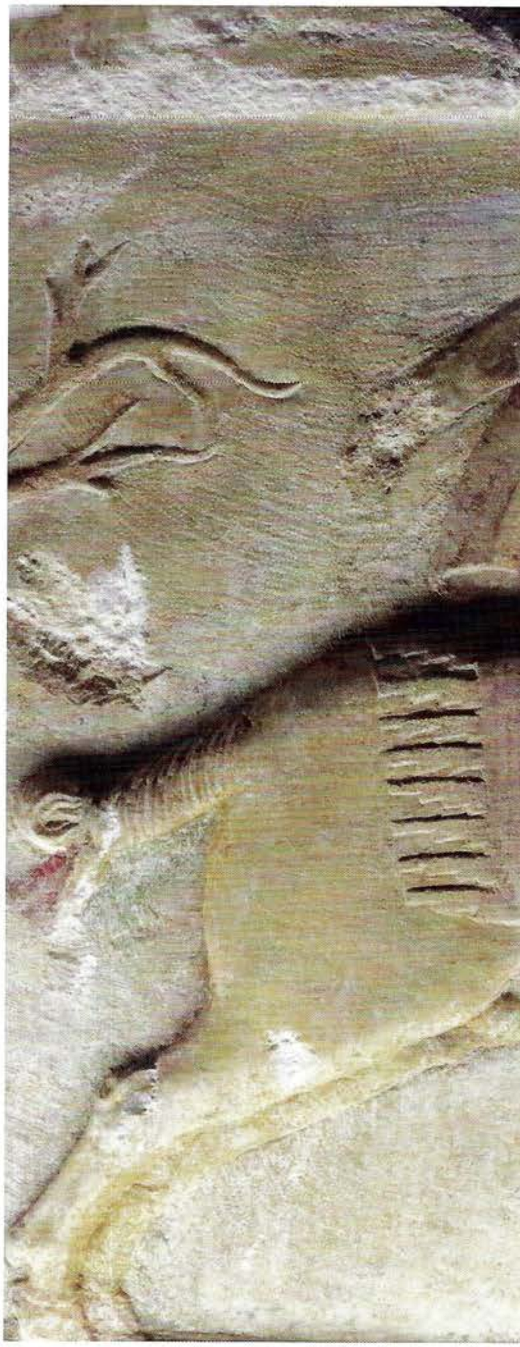
invited to park in the shade of a freshly planted grove of trees and then directed down a long ramp towards a basement entrance patrolled by security guards. The iron cube looked very forbidding, but a line of classical architraves and capitals beckoned us to descend.

The museum interior is a four-storey tower of enchantment. There are innumerable problems about trying to present the story of Troy, as there are just too many storylines, too many layers of history and they are all rich with controversy and detail. But I take my hat off to the designers. They have created a physical form that subdivides the story of Troy into digestible and quite separate chunks of history which can all be individually accessed by an exterior ramp, which slowly winds its way up to the view from the flat roof.

The ground floor functions as the museum depot for the whole province of the Troad – which is rich with fascinating sites, such as Alexandria Troas, Assos and Apollo Smintheus, in addition to Troy. If you knew the dusty old museum in Çanakkale, this is where all the treasures are now displayed. What you will not have seen is the "Sarcophagus of the Persian Knight" from the fourth century BC (overleaf), depicted with his closed war-helmet on one face and engaged in a ferociously vivid hunting scene on the other, where the wild boar has retained its original red pigment.

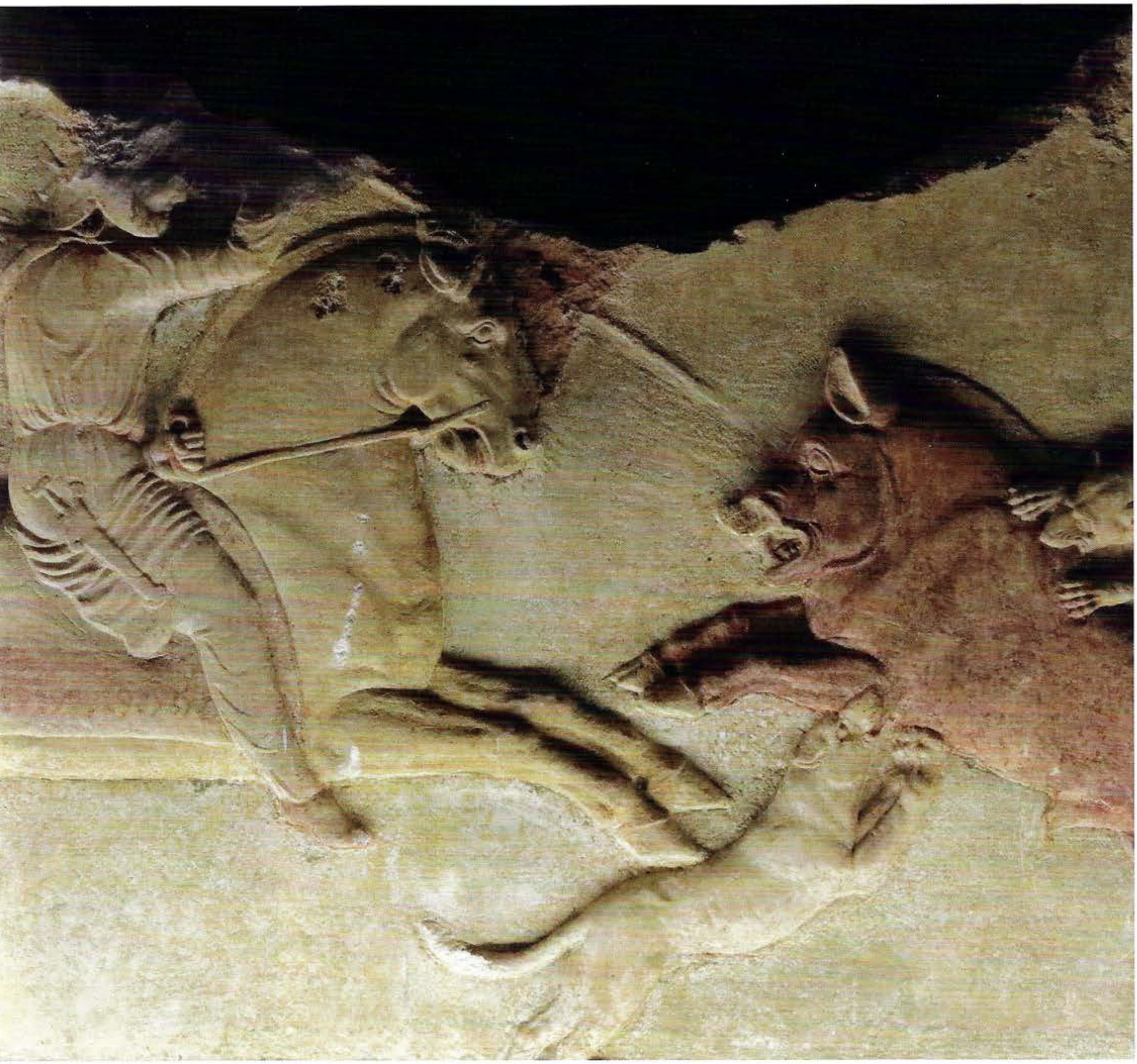
The second floor is dedicated to the





PHOTOGRAPHS: DON MCCULLIN

Above A vivid hunting scene in a relief on the 'Sarcophagus of the Persian Knight' from the 4th century BC. The wild boar and the knight's saddlecloth retain their original red pigment
Left A figure from the 2nd century AD

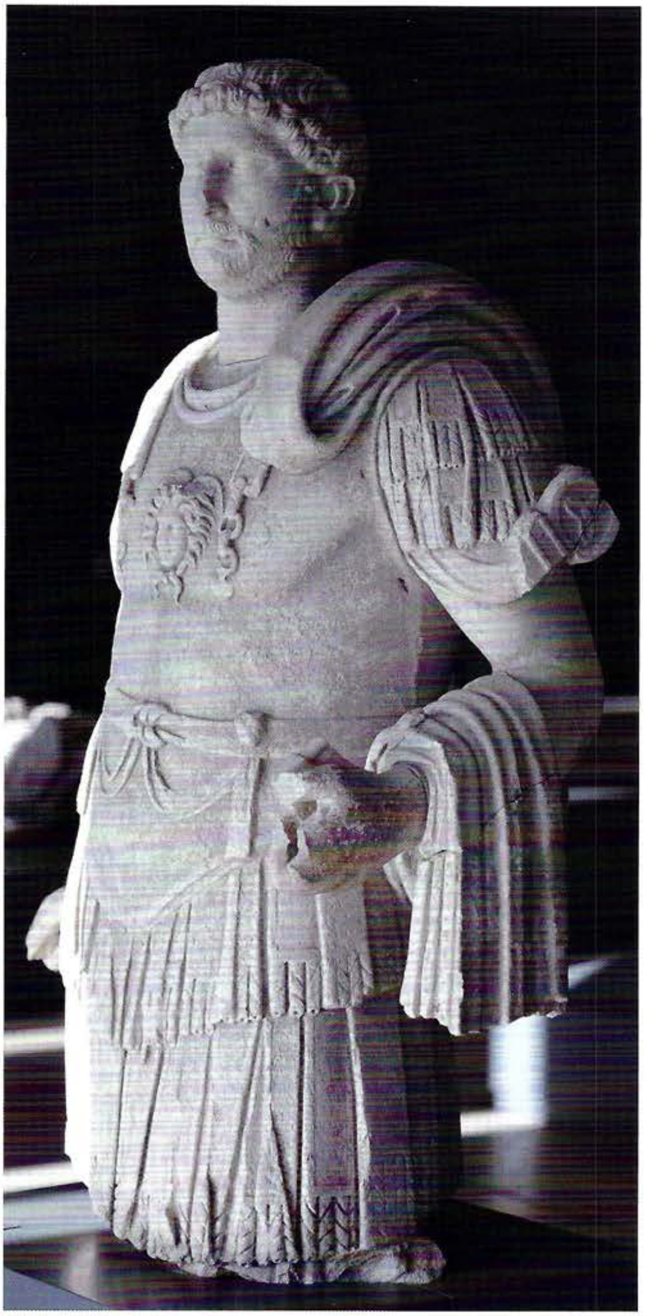


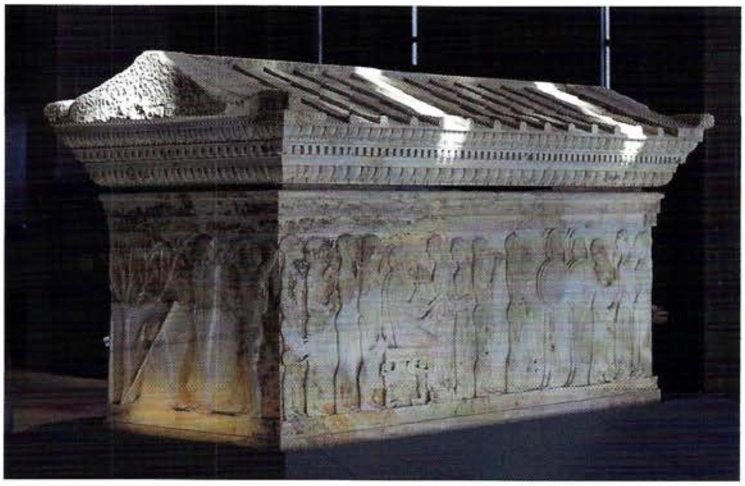
Bronze Age city of Ilion (Troy), explained through state-of-the-art maps and diagrams that flesh out the comparatively modest found objects. I found the shifting shape of Troy's natural harbour (now all farmland), and the research into seasonal winds, totally fascinating. For the direction and the force of wind had to be exactly right before an ancient merchant ship could force itself up the Dardanelles, against the prevailing current. This (and a freshwater spring) gives us all the information we need to explain why Troy was rebuilt over and over again.

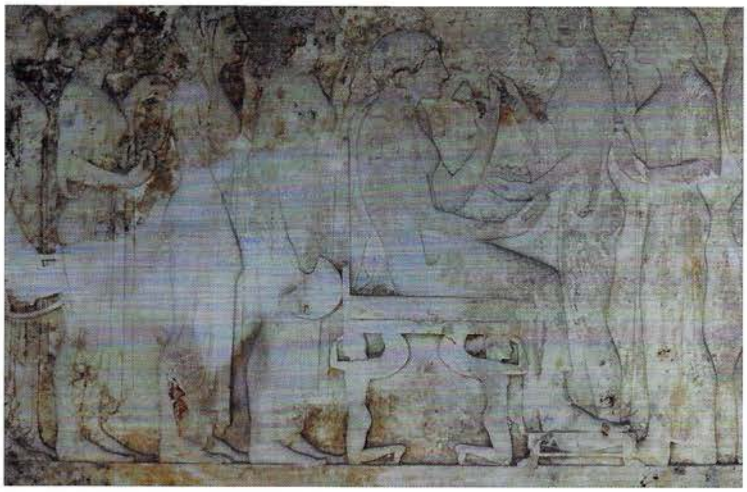
In the late Bronze Age, the Hittite Empire ruled over central Anatolia and established protectorates over north Syria and western Turkey. The latter region was then known as Arzwa, where Luwian was spoken. Wilusa (Troy) sat on the furthest northwestern frontier of Arzwa. In 1280 a Hittite King, Muwattali II, came to an agreement with Alaksandu, ruler of Wilusa, that protected him from the aggression of the Ahhiywans (Homer's Achaeans). This is the strategic background to the Trojan War.

The third floor will get the most visitor hits and attention. This not only displays the grandest carvings (including a very fine head of Augustus, an imposing statue of Hadrian and a cavorting, sensual Nerite) but also takes a visitor by the hand and tells the full and illustrated version of the epic of the Trojan War (not just the 50 days chronicled by *The Iliad*).

It also introduces us to Troy's later role as a city that attracted pilgrims for a thousand years. The tell (the mound built up from layer after layer of ruined city) was levelled to form a high terrace upon which stood a







PHOTOGRAPHS: DON MCCULLIN

Above A larger-than-life Hadrian, who visited Troy in AD 124. It was unearthed in 1993 in Troy's Odeon, which he restored, and where he perhaps presented his poem to Hector

Top and opposite The 'Polyxena Sarcophagus' (500–490BC) tells of the sacrifice of King Priam's daughter. The earliest figurative sarcophagus known in Anatolia, it was found, then abandoned, in 1994 by grave-robbers who thought it had already been robbed

Above, centre Hecuba, Polyxena's mother, mourns her daughter's death

Bottom row A 1st-century-AD head of Augustus; a figurine of Athena in a hat; a classical carving

fine temple to Athena. We know that the Persian emperor Xerxes sacrificed here (in 480BC), as did Alexander the Great (who ran naked to the tomb of Achilles on the shore in 334BC), Julius Caesar (48BC), Augustus (20BC) and Hadrian (AD 124).

In the centre of the gallery stands the Polyxena Sarcophagus. This vividly relates a Trojan myth, but it was not from Troy. It was discovered in 1994 at Gümüşçay, 120 kilometres to the east. It is exceptional, not only because it is dated 500–490BC (the period of the Persian Empire) and is therefore the oldest figurative sarcophagus in Anatolia, but because it is so moving and so utterly modern, shivering in very low relief. It is like a slice of the hidden history of woman that spares us no detail. The sacrifice of princess Polyxena, youngest daughter of King Priam (stabbed in the neck as her head is jerked back by her hair) as she is carried prone by a young gang of joshing male warriors towards the tomb of Achilles is vivid, beautiful and brutal. On other faces, we see the desperate (hair-tearing) grief of her sisters, and the solemn exhaustion of her seated mother, Queen Hecuba.

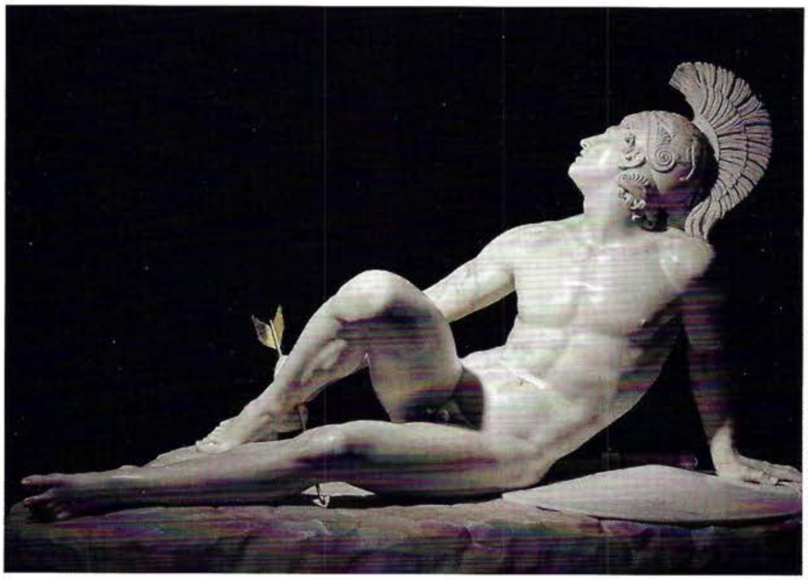
The fourth floor immerses us in the complex story of Troy's progressive excavations, and how this famous city got lost in the first place. The problem can be directly sourced to Strabo (and the library-bound scholars who followed in his wake). We also get introduced to Frank Calvert (1828–1908), the long-serving British consul who was totally at home in Çanakkale (his family traded in acorn cups, used in tanning) and whose pioneering work at Hisarlık would be eclipsed by the self-promoting Heinrich Schliemann. Calvert had bought half the site in order to conserve it and offered all his excavations finds to museums. There is a darkened studio space in the corner of this gallery where you can see all the treasures Schliemann stole from Troy – they await their return one day, *inshallah*.

The view from the roof rewards the slow ascent up the architectural ramp. Those familiar with *The Iliad* will be thrilled to slowly identify the landscape that Homer described. The islands that he refers to (Tenedos, Imbros and Samothrace) are all visible in good light, as are half the battlefield-beaches of Gallipoli. I was intrigued to find that you cannot see Mount Ida from Troy (where Homer places Zeus to observe the battlefield slaughter), but on my way down I got lost in the story of Mehmet the Conqueror, who could read Greek fluently. He had his own treasured copy of *The Iliad*, and consciously saw himself as the avenger of the Trojans. When he conquered Constantinople, he was as young as Achilles. ◆

The Museum of Troy *Nov 1 – March 31 8.30–5.30; April 1 – Oct 31 8.30–7. +90 286 217 67 40, www.muze.org.tr, and on instagram: @museumoftroy*

TROY STORY II
OF LOVE AND WAR

A NEW EXHIBITION AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM DRAWS ON THE WEALTH OF ART AND LITERATURE INSPIRED OVER CENTURIES BY THE ROMANCE AND MYSTERY OF TROJAN HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY. BARNABY ROGERSON IS BEGUILED



THE DEVONSHIRE COLLECTIONS, CHATSWORTH

I had been expecting to find that this exhibition, hosted by the British Museum, would succeed in uniting all the evidence from Troy. I had imagined that material from the various Schliemann excavations (held in Berlin) would be joined with that found by Frank Calvert (held in London) and then be referenced against the recent series of methodical digs in Turkey. The star of the show would be "Priam's Treasure" – currently possessed by Russia as one of the spoils of her victory over Nazi Germany.

I was wrong. There are no loans from either Russia or Turkey to the British Museum, not even a wooden horse.

The Troy exhibition at the British Museum has a very different brief. It is an inquiry into the artistic and literary inspiration of the Trojan story, rather than an historical inquest into a Bronze Age trading city. On these terms it is a glittering and triumphant success. A wonderfully eclectic gallery of art has been assembled, ranging from very ancient to very modern, all united by the Trojan theme.

Troy was never forgotten and did not need to await the Renaissance for its rediscovery. So the exhibition includes medieval manuscripts as well as an opulent sculpture of Achilles (a classical counterpart to the famous statue of the dying Gaul) commissioned in the early 19th century by a young English duke, and early surveys and watercolours of the Troad. There are Roman silver drinking vessels from a Danish chieftain's tomb, gorgeous examples of black and red figure ware (from Greece and Sicily), wall paintings from Pompei and pictures by Biagio d'Antonio, Rubens and Angelica Kauffman, some vigorous sketches by Nicolas Poussin and Henry Fuseli and prints by Elisabeth Frink. Now and then, your memory is stretched as you try to recall the literary source of some enigmatic scene such as Ajax falling naked on his broadsword, which has been planted firmly in the ground.

But there is a legitimate cause for some confusion, for this ancient artistic heritage rests on eight epics that once told the whole story of Troy, of which we now possess just two, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Fragments of these lost books survive in the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides aside from what Virgil would create 800 years later with his *Aeneid*. So there are plot variations, battles, campaigns and characters from the Trojan story that you will have never encountered, however diligently you can quote Homer.

Homer remains an historical enigma who has launched a thousand scholarly debates. The current consensus is that he did exist. He is now envisaged as the last (and the most brilliant) of a succession of oral bards who told this tale as an entertainment, literally singing for their supper. Bards worked with established mythical story cycles, to which they added their own variations – like a scriptwriter creating a film from a book.

We think Homer lived around 800BC (possibly born in Izmir), on the cusp of the new craft of writing, which would eventually record a standard rendition of his epics that had been recited by a dynasty of bards, the Homeridae (from Chios), for 300 years after his death. But it is intriguing to reflect that Homer had been separated from the events he so evocatively described by 400 years. He was clearly not interested in singing stories from his own time (dominated by irresistible iron weaponry and the mysteriously destructive sea peoples) but wanted to recall the glories of the Old Civilisation, whose warriors were descended from the gods and possessed dazzling bronze body armour.

Recent archaeology allows us to speculate that Homer may have recited *The Iliad* at Troy itself, for there are a group of altars raised to Heroes (Achilles and Hector) that stood before the ruined walls of the citadel of Troy. Historians have linked Troy's ancient name of Ilion to "Wilusa", which appears in Hittite records, and there is even a suggestion that "Priam" and "Paris" might be based on similar derivations.

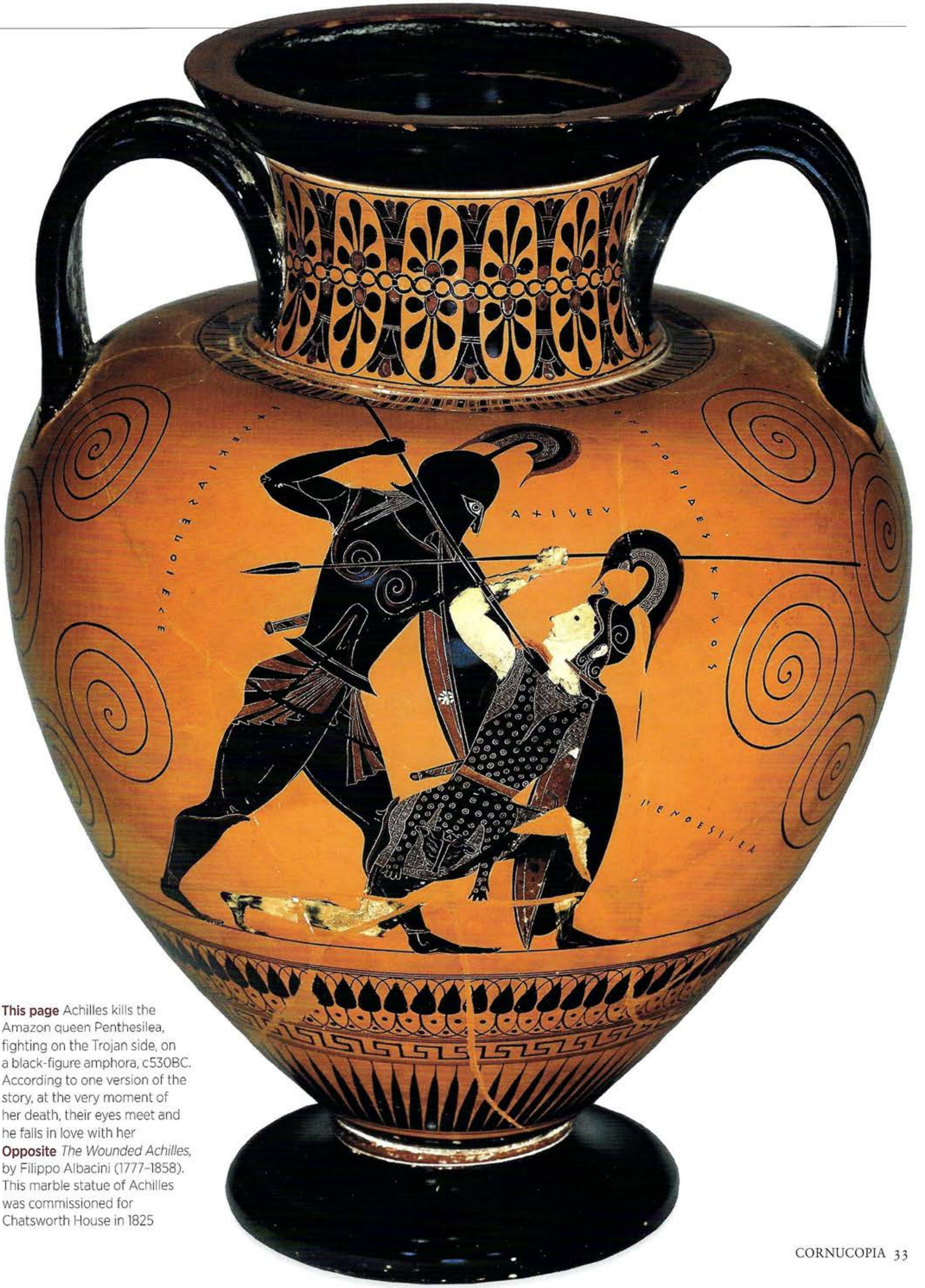
This Late Bronze Age era is represented by burnished ceramic pots (largely empty of figurative art) lent by Berlin, which were unearthed by Schliemann, the so-called discoverer of Troy. Schliemann was not a total fraud, especially towards the very end of his life, when he was assisted by trained technicians.

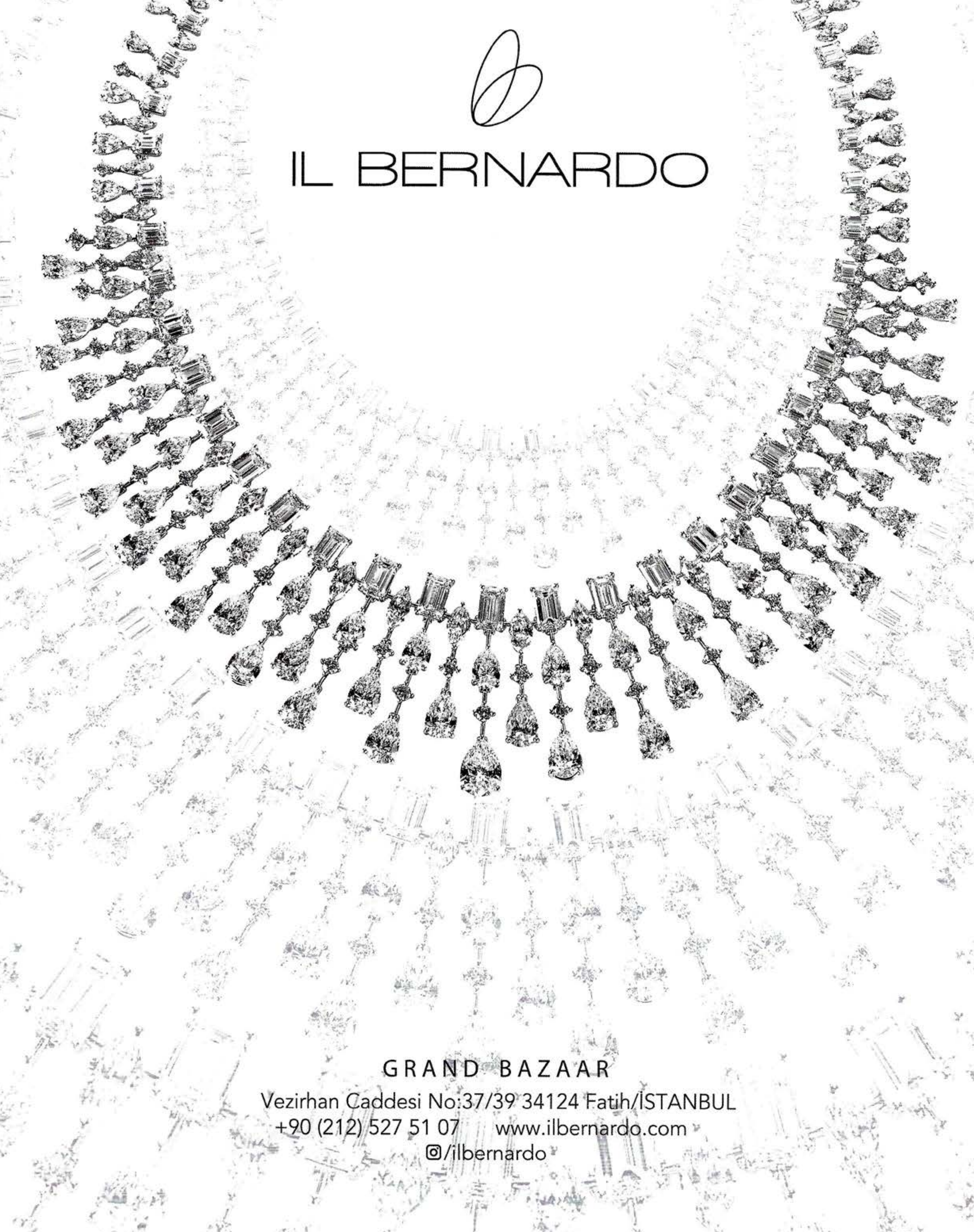
His early excavations were well-funded treasure hunts designed to reinvent him as a scholar, when he was, in reality, a dodgy German banker. He had made good during the California Gold Rush (where he acquired a reputation for short-weighing gold dust) and then bettered this fortune by supplying armaments to Russia during the Crimean War. A suspicion that he salted his excavations at Mycenae and Troy with gold objects designed to generate international publicity has never entirely gone away. For better or for worse, he has successfully woven himself into the 3,000-year-old story of Troy. An Odysseus for our times?

It was the triumph of Odysseus that drove the warrior hero Ajax to fall on his sword, rather than accept second place to such a man. ◆

Troy: Myth and Reality is at the British Museum until March 8, 2020; britishmuseum.org

Barnaby Rogerson is the author of 'In Search of Ancient Heroes of North Africa' (Haus, £20)





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BOOKS

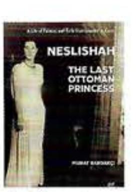
PRINCESS NESLISHAH, AN OTTOMAN TO THE LAST; THE BUILDING OF BYZANTIUM;
MUSICAL MAGIC FROM A RESTORED 18TH-CENTURY TANBUR;
HOW THE WEST VIEWED THE OTTOMANS; A TALE OF THREE EXILES

THE DYNASTY WRITES BACK

Philip Mansel

NESLISHAH
The Last Ottoman
Princess

Murat Bardakçı
AUC Press, paperback £19.95



Neslishah: The Last Ottoman Princess presents an Ottoman view of Turkey and Egypt in the 20th century, challenging nationalist and republican narratives. From Neslishah Sultan's dynastic perspective, Mustafa Kemal was admirable but ruthless. He saved her country but expelled her family and abolished the *Şeriat*. Nasser was a dictator who led Egypt to disaster.

Granddaughter of the last Ottoman sultan, Mehmed VI, who reigned from July 4, 1918 until his flight on a British battleship on November 9, 1922, Neslishah's birth in 1921 was the last to be greeted by an official gun salute. Before her death in Istanbul in 2012, this intelligent, forceful polyglot (like many of her family, she spoke Turkish, French, German, English and Arabic) recorded her memories and opinions, in her daughter's presence, with the journalist and historian Murat Bardakçı, author of books on Mehmed VI, the last Ottomans and the grand vizier Talât Pasha. The result is fascinating, original and readable.

She begins her story with her family's expulsion, by train from Çatalca, outside Istanbul (to avoid incidents inside it), to Switzerland on March 7, 1924. Each member of the dynasty was given a thousand pounds and a passport for a year, but deprived of their Turkish citizenship.

AUC PRESS

PRINCESS NESLISHAH SITS ON A MESSERSCHMITT THREE-WHEELER, WHILE HER HUSBAND, PRINCE ABDULMONEIM, TAKES THE WHEEL

Many Ottomans, convinced that they would soon return to Turkey, settled in France, rather than in a Muslim country. Their strong Ottoman Muslim identity did not exclude a desire to be modern and French-speaking, and to hold a French passport. Neslishah's cultivated grandfather Abdülmecid II, the last Caliph, had long considered France his "second fatherland". Nice became the Ottoman dynasty's capital in exile, where some found what Sabiha Sultan, Neslishah's mother, called "inner peace". The last Caliph spent his exile bathing, painting, reading, playing chamber music "with his wives and other ladies" and writing his memoirs.

So many Ottomans lived in Nice that patisseries stayed open late during Ramazan to help them break their fast more easily. They did not live in the past. Some Istanbul ladies had already started giving "*cocktails dansants*" before 1924. Ottoman princesses danced *en decolleté* in hotels in Nice, while in the Turkish Republic even Mustafa Kemal's radical wife, Latife, still covered her hair in public; and Turkish ladies had to be ordered to dance in hotels.

Exile brought freedom and poverty. Fehime Sultan, who had composed waltzes and military marches in Istanbul, was known in Nice as "the butterfly princess" for her love of dancing, often with Spanish or Argentinian professionals. She later died of tuberculosis. In 1925 Mehmed VI had to be buried at night in San Remo to prevent his creditors seizing his coffin.

Complaining that Europe smelt of gunpowder, the Caliph's son, Neslishah's father, Ömer Farouk Efendi, took his family to Egypt in 1938. In 1940, against her will, she was married, in the splendours of Prince Mohammed Ali's neo-Ottoman and neo-Mameluk Manyal Palace on Roda island in the Nile, to his wealthy nephew Prince Abdulmoneim – she did not speak to her father for months. Poverty drove the wedding: "they were fed up with darning and ironing and mending". Eventually the spouses became "excellent friends" and enjoyed Cairo in the 1940s when it was "the most exciting city in the world". Cairo shaped her tastes and outlook as much as her Ottoman background. She devoted some of her time to the dynastic charity, the Oeuvre Mohammed Ali: she remembers how well run their schools and hospitals were, until the Egyptian government took them over.

The military coup of 1952, expelling King Farouk and bringing the Free Officers under Nasser and Neguib to power, changed their lives. From August 1952 to June 1953, during Nasser's brief "bridging period" between the monarchy and the republic, she enjoyed 11 months as "first lady of Egypt". Her husband (considered by some to have a better claim to the throne than the King) was Regent for his exiled cousin's son "King" Ahmad Fouad. Nasser and his officers, however, soon established a dictatorship. Years later at her husband's funeral, by her account, General Neguib, briefly the popular President of Egypt in 1953–54, who had come to hate Nasser, apologised for abolishing the monarchy, saying: "I betrayed you and you left the country to the thieves. Please forgive me."

In Turkey members of the Ottoman dynasty were vilified. Abroad, its continuing prestige was confirmed by a flurry of foreign marriages. Two Ottoman princesses were married to wealthy princes of Hyderabad (long the most pro-Ottoman of Indian states) in Nice in 1931. They helped advance women's legal status and start schools and hospitals in Hyderabad. Three other princesses, including Neslishah, married Egyptian princes. An ambitious plan to marry her niece Fazile to Faisal II, last king of Iraq, was shattered by his murder in the 1958 revolution. Nasser became suspicious. Neslishah endured interrogations, six months' house arrest and two show trials by a military court. She had been brought up to consider it shameful to show weakness, and survived. Her cousin Mahmud Namuk, like many of Nasser's victims, died in prison.

In 1959, having had many possessions in Egypt confiscated, Neslishah left for France, where her children were educated. Finally in 1964 she returned to Istanbul. Until her death in 2012, she watched its renaissance as a modern, international city.

The 107 photographs are superb. Even in exile, the family appears confident, smiling and smartly dressed. One of the most attractive figures is her mother, Sabiha Sultan, daughter of Mehmed VI. She felt the "venom of separation" from Turkey, she wrote, and that "the empire belonged to the Turks as much as the republic". A persistent, if unproven, rumour put around by his enemies, claims that Mustafa Kemal himself, before his departure to Anatolia in May 1919, when he was her father's ADC, had hoped to marry her, as his rival Enver Pasha had married another princess six years earlier. "Had you married the man, we would not have had all these problems," her cousins are said to have complained.

Relations between the dynasty and Mustafa Kemal (not as hostile before their expulsion as after it), hitherto hidden in state archives, in Sabiha Sultan's diary, correspondence and memoirs and in Abdülmecid's memoirs, will be the subject of Bardakçı's potentially explosive next book.

Philip Mansel's books include 'Constantinople: City of the World's Desire' (1995), 'Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean' (2010), and 'King of the World: the Life of Louis XIV' (2019). www.philipmansel.com

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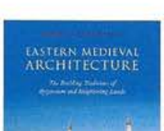
BUILDING BYZANTIUM

Benjamin Anderson

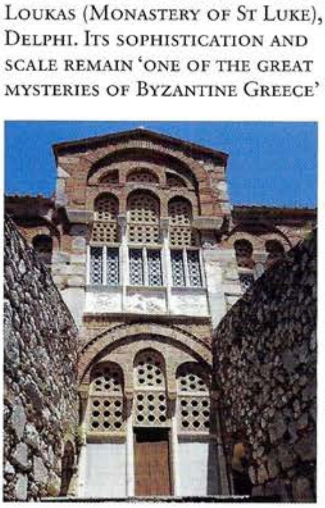
EASTERN MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE
The Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighboring Lands

Robert G Ousterhout
Oxford University Press, £42



Byzantine buildings are, by definition, old, but the study of Byzantine architecture is young, especially by comparison to neighbouring fields. Eighteenth-century dilettanti could peruse printed volumes depicting Greek and Roman ruins from Baalbek to Bath, Paestum to Palmyra, Split to Salonica. A century later, by contrast, even such an enthusiast as John Ruskin still knew nothing of Byzantine buildings outside of Italy. Intrepid tourists made sure to see Ayasofya (Haghia Sophia), but the other medieval buildings of Constantinople were little discussed beyond the works of local antiquarians, those of the provinces essentially unknown except to the monks and parishioners who worshipped there day to day.

Multiple, sometimes contradictory movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries – modernism, nationalism, anti-classicism, aestheticism – spurred greater curiosity about the long millennium between the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine the Great (AD306–337) to its capture under Mehmed the Conqueror in the 15th century. The first figures to carefully study individual Byzantine structures were as likely to be architects as professors. For example, in 1901, the Arts and Crafts builders Robert Weir Schultz and Sidney Barnsley published a beautiful and meticulous study of the Monastery of St Luke (Hosios Loukas) on the slopes of Mount Helicon, near Delphi.



ABOVE AYASOFYA, A VAST SPACE BUILT IN A RUSH IN THE 6TH CENTURY – JUST SIX YEARS FROM CONCEPTION TO COMPLETION
BELOW THE 11TH-CENTURY HOSIOS LOUKAS (MONASTERY OF ST LUKE), DELPHI. ITS SOPHISTICATION AND SCALE REMAIN 'ONE OF THE GREAT MYSTERIES OF BYZANTINE GREECE'

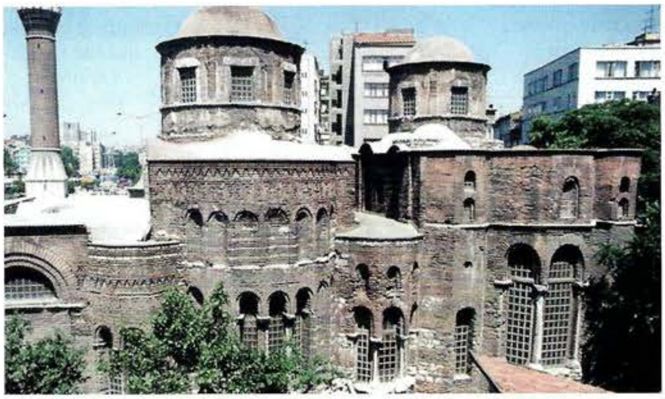
Schultz and Barnsley's book is among the oldest to appear in the bibliography of Robert Ousterhout's splendid *Eastern Medieval Architecture*, and it provides a suitable vantage point from which to consider the growth of the field in the intervening 118 years. The quantity of available data has expanded by several orders of magnitude, as *The Monastery of St Luke* has been joined by whole libraries full of scholarship: studies of buildings and regional traditions, the landscapes that they occupied, and the uses to which they were put. Ousterhout himself has written foundational studies of structures from Italy through

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROBERT G OUSTERHOUT

Thrace to Constantinople, Cappadocia and Jerusalem.

His is not the first synthesis. Since 1965 the standard text in English has been Richard Krautheimer's *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*. Krautheimer was a brilliant system-builder who brought order to masses of evidence, thus providing a framework within which new knowledge could be generated. Ousterhout has the advantage of that knowledge, which allows him in turn to adopt a more capacious perspective than his distinguished predecessor. His geography is wider, his chronology longer and his focus distinct.

BELOW FENARİ İSA CAMİİ (THE MONASTERY OF CONSTANTINE LIPS) IN FATİH, IN THE HEART OF OLD ISTANBUL – A 10TH-CENTURY CHURCH EXPANDED IN 1282–1303 – ONE OF A GROUP OF LATER, HIGHLY INVENTIVE SMALLER CHURCHES THAT INCLUDED THE CHURCH OF THE CHORA (KARİYE)



The broader geography is heralded already in the title. *Eastern Medieval Architecture* is delimited neither by religion nor by politics, even while Christianity and Byzantium still stand at its centre. A building is different in kind from a law: its force can extend across borders, and it retains its validity even if its authors are foreign. Ousterhout supplies striking examples of both phenomena in relation to Ayasofya. Its beauty was said to have convinced the early Rus to adopt Eastern Orthodoxy, even while they maintained their political independence from Constantinople. And yet when the dome of this most Byzantine building collapsed in 989 an Armenian, the architect Trdat, was hired to rebuild it.

Both Trdat and the Rus lead into the latter half of the Byzantium millennium, which occupied barely a quarter of Krautheimer's book, but receives more proportionate treatment from Ousterhout. This closer attention to later centuries bears fruit, for example, in the comparison of the Crusader architecture of the Levant to the buildings of Sicily. In the Levant, style became polarised, with specific parts of buildings tied to divisive political and religious identities. In Sicily, by contrast, rulers encouraged the development of a new, hybrid architectural vocabulary expressive of the multicultural, and relatively harmonious, character of their domains.

Nor does Ousterhout's study end with the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. His penultimate chapter pursues another fascinating cross-cultural comparison, namely between the early Ottoman and tsarist Russian appropriations and adaptations of Byzantine architectural heritage.

Ousterhout's distinct focus develops out of this more capacious spatial and chronological framework. Whereas Krautheimer wrote his story primarily on the basis of formal criteria – the way that buildings appear when drawn in form and elevation – Ousterhout is equally interested in the techniques of the builders, those "anonymous and professionally illiterate" individuals who moved across political borders, and whose collective knowledge was maintained and transmitted across generations, even as empires and states rose and fell.

The shift in focus from form to technique entails some surprising consequences. Ayasofya appears less as an early and unattainable paragon, Justinian's towering achievement that no sovereign until Süleyman could surpass; more as a fascinating anomaly, both in the abstract formal ambition of its mathematician-architects, Anthemios and Isidore, and in the wilful and reckless haste with which it was raised. The majority of Byzantine builders worked in a fundamentally different mode, brick by stone by brick, in which "design and construction could happen simultaneously".

The result was an "additive process of design" that aimed at "complexity rather than monumentality". Thrift and modesty were virtues. Materials were chosen according to local or regional variability. Reuse was pursued both in the sourcing of materials and in the preference for maintaining and expanding upon old buildings, rather than tearing down and building from scratch. From this perspective, Ayasofya is no longer the prototypical Byzantine building of Constantinople. Our focus turns instead to the smaller and later complexes that grew up over centuries and whose lives also extended through the Ottoman centuries and into today's more ambitious tourist itineraries: Zeyrek Camii (the Pantokrator Monastery), Kariye Camii (the Chora Monastery) and Fenari İsa Camii (the Monastery of Constantine Lips).

If scale and formal inventiveness are the primary criteria by which we judge architecture – build big, build new – then these smaller, less pretentious structures will always fall short of Ayasofya. Ousterhout teaches us to see them differently, and to appreciate the distinct aesthetic criteria that they advance: "small-scale, intricate, rich in ornament". These values are distinct not only from those advanced by Justinian's great church, but also from those advanced by the contemporary Western buildings that form our canons of the Romanesque and the Gothic.

Distinct, but not irreconcilable: here we return to Ousterhout's capacious geography, which allows for close consideration of those borderlands in which West and East, style and technique, met and merged to form complex new syntheses. Thus Crac des Chevaliers, the great Crusader fortress in Syria, presents "a very instructive disjunction between architectural style and construction technology", in which local masons reinterpreted Gothic forms.

In earlier histories that drew meaning on a grand scale, Crac necessarily fell between the cracks. No architectural genius drew its plan – indeed, like most Byzantine buildings, it was probably not based on a paper or parchment plan at all, but drawn out on the ground by the builders with ropes. But in Ousterhout's view, it means no less for all that. His builders make meaning. The result is a complete contrast to the stereotype of Byzantium as a crystalline fantasy world, whose monuments are not of brick but (in Yeats's words) "of unageing intellect"; and a recipe for a new appreciation of Byzantine architecture.

"How new?" we might well ask if we think once more back to Schultz and Barnsley, and to their Arts and Crafts contemporaries. They too saw this side of Byzantine architecture, learned to appreciate the warmth of the stones carved leaf by leaf and laid one beside the next by builders whom they considered their peers and predecessors. For them, the Byzantine was a potential antidote to the mass production of building materials, the spectre of industrialisation.

Ultimately Ousterhout's view speaks most immediately to a different, more contemporary set of concerns. The past few decades have seen the rise of the star architects, the Anthemios and Isidore of our day, whose abstract formal inventions are encoded in computer-generated drawings that builders must realise by any means necessary. Under this regime the ideal commission is the one that spares no expense, that draws its material from every corner of the globe – in other words, something very much like Ayasofya.

Of necessity, however, the pendulum starts to swing back in the other direction, and a new desire emerges for creative reuse, both of materials and of entire buildings. This is how the Byzantine might become new again: not through the "neo-Byzantine" imitation of historic forms – some examples of which Ousterhout considers in his concluding chapter – but instead as a model for a more sustainable concept of architecture, one no less capable of creating beauty.

Perhaps I am getting carried away. But this is a book that draws you in and makes you think. It is beautifully written, and filled with the most carefully chosen photographs of structures and details, rendered in glorious colour, and scores of drawings by the author's own hand. The printed volume is generously sized, perfect for modern-day dilettanti to peruse at home, but too hefty to carry along while travelling – for that you will need the e-book. If every generation gets the history of Byzantine architecture that it deserves, then ours is very fortunate indeed!

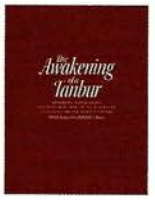
Benjamin Anderson is associate professor of History of Art and Classics at Cornell University, bwa32@cornell.edu. He is co-author, with Robert G Ousterhout, of 'Palmyra 1885: The Wolfe Expedition and the Photographs of John Henry Haynes' (Cornucopia, £19.95)

A SLEEPING BEAUTY

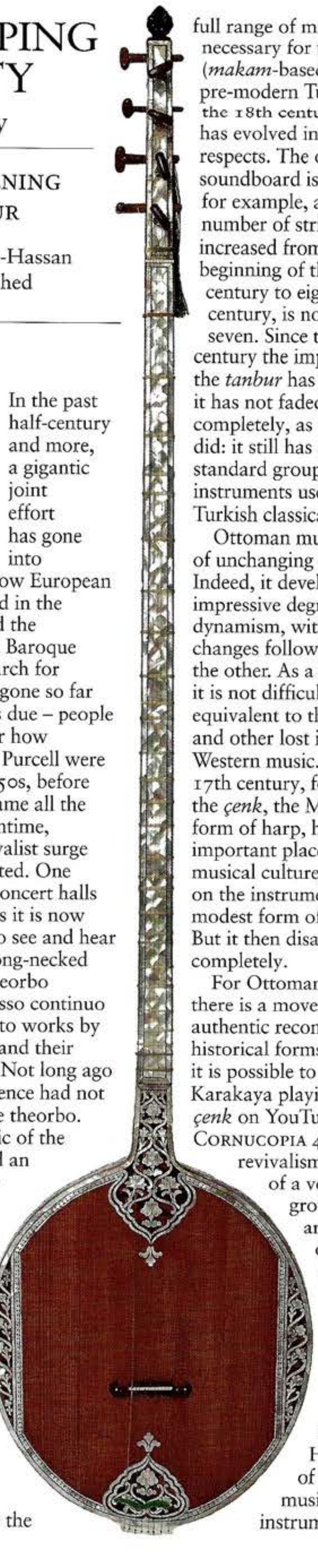
Tim Stanley

THE AWAKENING OF A TANBUR

Karim Othman-Hassan
Privately published


The Awakening of a Tanbur

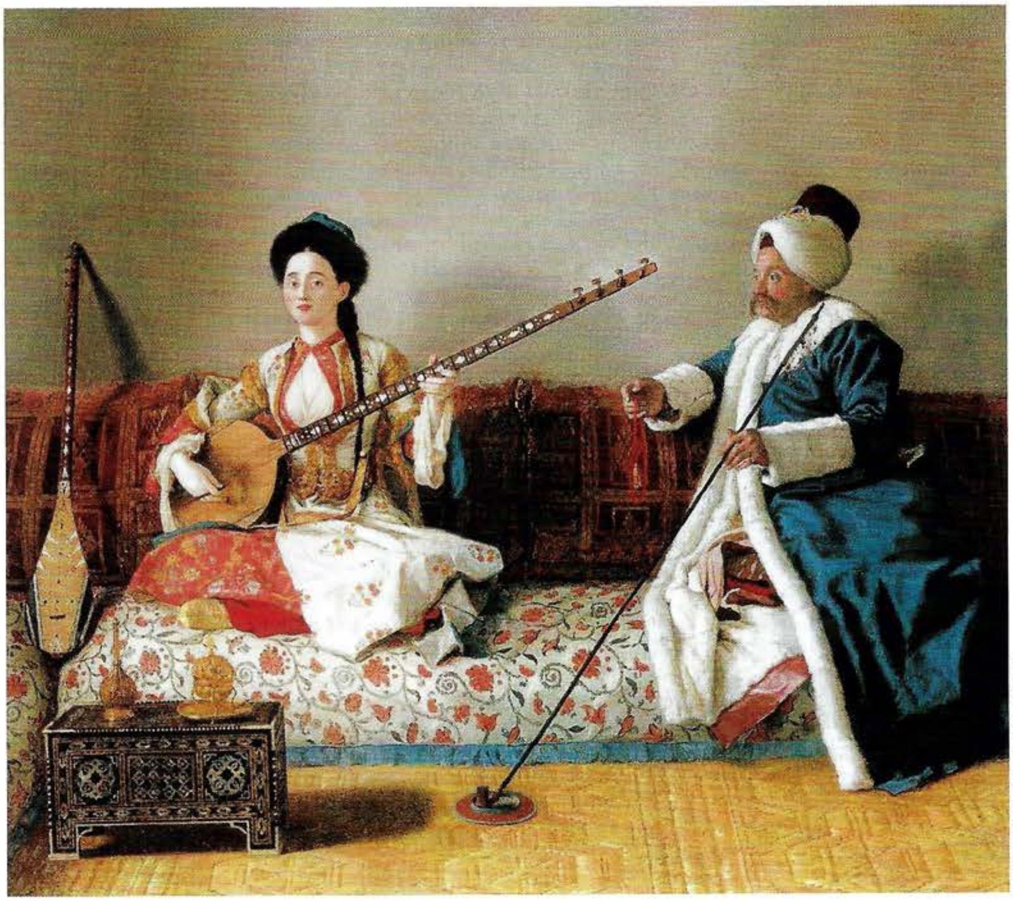
In the past half-century and more, a gigantic joint effort has gone into reconstructing how European music was played in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and Baroque periods. This search for authenticity has gone so far that a reaction is due – people will want to hear how Monteverdi and Purcell were played in the 1950s, before authenticity became all the rage. In the meantime, though, the revivalist surge continues unabated. One result is that in concert halls and opera houses it is now fairly common to see and hear the enormous, long-necked lute called the theorbo providing the basso continuo accompaniment to works by Handel, Vivaldi and their contemporaries. Not long ago most of the audience had not even heard of the theorbo.



Ottoman music of the 18th century had an equivalent to the theorbo in the *tanbur*, an outsized form of long-necked lute. During its heyday it was the most important stringed instrument, its long neck allowing the player to execute the full range of micro-tones necessary for the modal (*makam*-based) music of pre-modern Turkey. Since the 18th century the *tanbur* has evolved in many respects. The once convex soundboard is now concave, for example, and the number of strings, which increased from five at the beginning of the 18th century to eight in the 19th century, is now generally seven. Since the 18th century the importance of the *tanbur* has declined, but it has not faded away completely, as the theorbo did: it still has a place in the standard group of instruments used to play Turkish classical music.

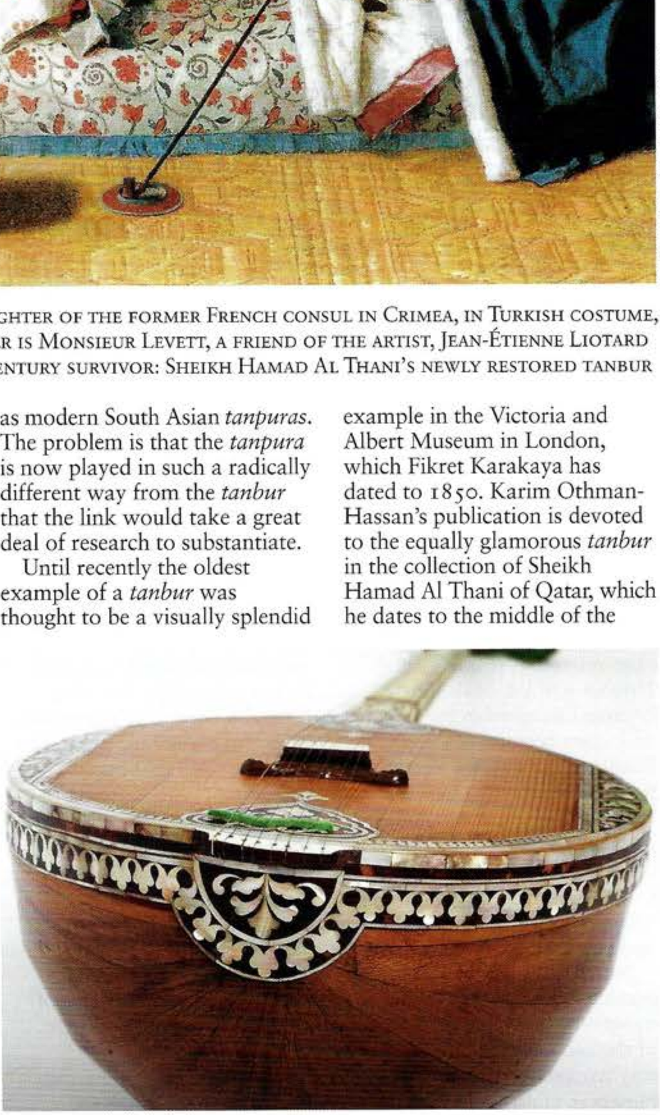
Ottoman music is not one of unchanging tradition. Indeed, it developed with an impressive degree of dynamism, with major changes following one after the other. As a consequence, it is not difficult to find an equivalent to the theorbo and other lost instruments of Western music. Until the 17th century, for example, the *çenk*, the Middle Eastern form of harp, held an important place in Ottoman musical culture, with virtuosi on the instrument enjoying a modest form of celebrity. But it then disappeared completely.

For Ottoman music, too, there is a movement for the authentic reconstruction of historical forms. As a result, it is possible to watch Fikret Karakaya playing a recreated *çenk* on YouTube (see CORNUCOPIA 43). But this revivalism is the work of a very small group of people, and the range of sources they can rely on for their work is relatively narrow. In this context, Karim Othman-Hassan's study of a single musical instrument cannot



MUSÉE DU LOUVRE / A DEQUIER – M BARD

Above Mademoiselle Glavani, daughter of the former French consul in Crimea, in Turkish costume, playing the tanbur, c1740. With her is Monsieur Levett, a friend of the artist, Jean-Étienne Liotard
Below and left A rare mid-18th-century survivor: Sheikh Hamad Al Thani's newly restored tanbur



help but make its mark.

The *tanbur* seems to have emerged just as the *çenk* disappeared, but where did it come from? Other long-necked lutes from the former Ottoman lands, such as the *bağlama*, have a pear-shaped soundbox, whereas the *tanbur*'s body is hemispherical. It had this shape for most of the 18th century, as we can see from several contemporary depictions, both Ottoman and European.

Was there a transition from a pear-shaped to a hemispherical soundbox sometime in the 17th century, which would have been a relatively sudden event, or was the *tanbur* introduced from outside the Empire? One candidate might be the South Asian *tanpura*, especially as the earliest scientific illustration of a *tanbur*, in Dimitrie Cantemir's famous work on Ottoman music (c1700), shows the instrument with the same gourdlike shape as modern South Asian *tanpuras*. The problem is that the *tanpura* is now played in such a radically different way from the *tanbur* that the link would take a great deal of research to substantiate.

Until recently the oldest example of a *tanbur* was thought to be a visually splendid example in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, which Fikret Karakaya has dated to 1850. Karim Othman-Hassan's publication is devoted to the equally glamorous *tanbur* in the collection of Sheikh Hamad Al Thani of Qatar, which he dates to the middle of the 18th century. He gives a similar date to the V&A example.

The book is beautifully and thoroughly illustrated, with a good deal of the modestly sized text given over to recording how the instrument was conserved. But it also provides a great deal of contextual material for understanding how the *tanbur* developed in the 18th and 19th centuries, and how it was used. Indeed, the conservation of the instrument that Othman-Hassan directed was so thorough that Sheikh Hamad's *tanbur* can now be used to play 18th-century compositions, as evidenced by a set of video and audio recordings that is also being circulated.

The book brings together the visual evidence for the history of the *tanbur*. This includes images by artists who happen to include a *tanbur* in their compositions, among them very informative works by Abdülcelil Levnî (d1732) and Jean-Etienne Liotard (active in Istanbul 1738–42). Another group are illustrations to works of musicology, and they include the unusual gourd-shaped instrument depicted in Cantemir's treatise and those in two works of 1750. One is by the French music specialist Charles Fonton, whose mother was a Levantine from Pera, and the other by Kemânî Hızır Ağa. This last is important for anchoring the V&A's instrument to the mid-18th century, as the unusual layout of the decoration on the belly is echoed precisely in the painting. On the other hand, Liotard's depiction of M Levett and Mlle Glavani in Turkish dress provides evidence that the more conventional layout seen on Sheikh Hamad's *tanbur* was also current in this period.

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'The Awakening of a Tanbur: Report of Restoration and Research into the 18th-century Tanbur Belonging to His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani' is available online at oliverhoareltd.com/tanbur

THE WAY WE SAW TURKEY

David Barchard

USEFUL ENEMIES
Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450-1750

Noel Malcolm
Oxford University Press, £25

How should the countries of Europe deal with Islam and the Turks? Should they try placing restrictions on interaction with the latter? The idea has a longer history than most people realise. Sir Noel Malcolm reminds us early on in his new book that the Lateran Council of the Catholic Church in 1189 issued a canon banning sales of the strategic goods of those days – weaponry, iron and timber – and also the piloting of ships. They were perhaps distant predecessors of the sanctions currently being discussed in the US Congress. But the canon did nothing to stop the advancing Turks, who went on in the next two-and-a-half centuries to destroy the Byzantine Empire, conquer Istanbul, and make the city their springboard for invasions and conquests in eastern Europe and the Mediterranean world.

In 1450 – at the start of this magisterial volume – scholars, philosophers, theologians and diplomats across Europe struggled to understand Islam and the Ottoman apogee, a threatening rival civilisation. By its conclusion, in the mid-18th century, they were discussing the reasons why it had grown weaker and why the Turkish Empire was becoming a candidate for imperial expansion.

Useful Enemies is the second of three books by Malcolm that open new windows into our understanding of relations between Turkey and Western Europe in the early modern period. Malcolm's previous book on Islamic and Turkish contact with Europe, *Agents of Empire*, was a colourful account of the warfare and derring-do of the contest between Venice and the Ottomans in the Balkans. A third book is on the way, dealing with "actual human interactions": Muslim slaves in Europe and Christian captives in Europe, Moriscos and missionaries.

Both the volumes published so far are wonders of erudition, tracing ideas and attitudes back to their origins. No language or text is too obscure or too detailed to avoid Malcolm's lucid dissection. No document seems to have a context that he does not know and succinctly explain. So although some of the views cited about the Ottoman Empire in early modern Europe are already familiar to specialist readers, this book traces widely scattered ideas across the literature of Christian Europe, drawing them together into a sharply focused continuous narrative which reflects not just the evolution of the Ottoman Empire, but the development of modern political philosophy in Europe and shifts in European political attitudes, such as a growing interest in religious toleration and a dislike of despotism.

Despite the fact that the word "enemies" is part of the book's title, this is not an unqualified account of "otherisation", demonisation and hostility – although, to Malcolm's clear distaste, all of these are regularly encountered. A distinguished Hobbes scholar, Malcolm became interested in the Balkans and Islam because of the war in Bosnia in the 1990s. Entering a field entirely new to him, he reversed some of the previous interpretations on the subject. Overall he detects "a whole gamut of attitudes" including "fascination, admiration and envy".

Nevertheless, European admiration seems to have been mostly for the military qualities of the early Ottomans and the way troops were disciplined. However, confronted by a larger and dangerous enemy state, early-modern European views of Ottoman Turkey can read somewhat like 20th-century Kremlinology. One of the best surveys of Turkey during this period is Sir Paul Rycaut's *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1666), a comprehensive and still very readable survey of Ottoman government and society. It was a remarkable achievement, written after living only five years in Turkey, but it exudes an intense dislike and fear of a dangerous alien empire.

Attitudes were nevertheless changing. A turning point came in the second half of the 16th century with the emergence of a "new paradigm". The late-medieval notion of the Turkish Empire as "a malevolent and oppressive regime, inspired at least in part by an evil religion" gave way to something much more subtle. The Ottoman Empire was viewed as "a comparatively well-ordered system" of government, judiciary and civil and military conditions. "…[S]ignificant aspects of civil life were better arranged than their equivalents in Western Christendom. It was a system, apparently, in which ordinary people enjoyed real material benefits, and were generally content to obey their rulers." This sounds not unlike the arguments that intelligent Chinese make in the West today about the advantages of a system in which decisions are swiftly implemented without the delays and compromises of democracy.

The late-medieval notion of the Turkish Empire as 'a malevolent and oppressive regime, inspired at least in part by an evil religion' gave way to something much more subtle

This perception (which conflicts dramatically with almost all European views of Turkey in the final Ottoman century after 1800 when "backwardness" had become a further new paradigm for Western observers) could be used in the 17th and 18th centuries, either to make contrasts with Western rulers that were unflattering to the latter, or even to urge the adoption of Ottoman methods of doing things.

As the Enlightenment arrived, some people even contrasted Trinitarian Christianity unfavourably with what they thought was the much more rational Unitarianism of Islam. Voltaire was among those writers who saw Islam as a device for "decentring" Christianity and opening it up for criticism. Henry Stubbe, a late-17th-century English thinker, and Henri de Boulainvillier, an early-18th-century French one, both argued – though seemingly did not dare to publish – that Mohammed was not an impostor, but "an exemplary religious leader".

By then, however, other writers were groping for explanations of the increasingly visible weakness of the Ottomans while Europe advanced. The Empire now appeared as a despotism that had been weakened and curtailed.

On the other hand, obstructing a despot might actually protect the system he headed. Montesquieu suggested that things blocking the way of despotism might be the very ones that enabled it to survive, whereas: "Reducing everything to the despot's will might produce total instability and self-destruction."

Why were some states, such as the Ottomans, more despotic than others? As scientific explanations superseded moral ones, a variety of possible factors was cited. Montesquieu thought that the explanation must be that climate and material conditions determined political behaviour. The Ottomans, being products of a warm climate, would never conquer Northern Europe, because "soldiers from the south could not tolerate its low temperatures". But as Malcolm points out, other writers were aware that there were extremes of climate in Turkey, and that the Greeks lived in the same climate as the Turks while being noticeably less martial.

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With absolutism increasingly discredited in Western Europe and British control expanding in India, Western thinking about possible agendas towards the Ottomans altered too. Though Abrahim-Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperon, a scholar of India and Islamic cultures, observed that in some ways, the Ottoman Sultan was more circumscribed by law than the King of England, Malcolm writes that "despotism had become, in Anquetil-Duperon's view, a convenient pretext for Western interference".

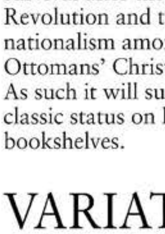
Useful Enemies is a complex, sometimes challenging, but always lucid book. It is a valuable prologue to the desperate struggle for Turkish survival after the French Revolution and the rise of nationalism among the Ottomans' Christian subjects. As such it will surely enjoy classic status on historians' bookshelves.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF EXILE

Caroline Eden

Of Strangers and Bees

Hamid Ismailov
Translated by Shelley Fairweather-Vega
Tilted Axis Press, £9.99

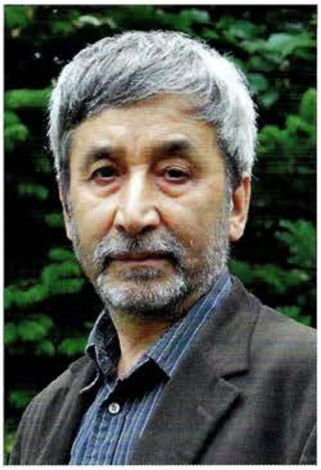


The title of Hamid Ismailov's new book, *Of Strangers and Bees,* offers a clue to both the life and mind of the author and the central theme of exile that permeates this curious work of translated fiction.

Ismailov is a unique figure in world literature. Born into a traditional Uzbek family in Tokmok, modern-day Kyrgyzstan, for more than 20 years he worked at the BBC World Service in London, where he has lived since 1994 having been forced to leave Uzbekistan for what the state called "unacceptable democratic tendencies". Still silenced in his home country, several of his Russian-language novels have been published in English, including *The Railway* and *The Underground.* Last year *The Devils' Dance*, the first of his Uzbek novels to appear in English, won the EBRD literature prize. This was especially significant given that only a handful of Uzbek books have ever been translated into the English language.

Of Strangers and Bees is a fantastical book shared by a trio of main characters. There is the impoverished Uzbek writer in exile, Sheikhov, who spends time in cities such as Paris and Bamberg, earning a meagre wage translating texts for a living. While overseas, he spends time missing his daughter and worrying about visas whilst becoming increasingly distracted and removed from his main goal, which is tracing the life of the 10th-century Islamic philosopher and polymath Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn Sina, or Avicenna, born in the Bukhara region of Uzbekistan. Yet, Sheikhov is not simply delving into Avicenna's past: he believes that the great thinker is somehow living on today, in the modern age, amongst us. Despite his struggles Sheikhov is a gentle soul, who shares his pensive thoughts on otherness and society, sometimes chest-crushingly so: "It turns out kindness remains kindness, and does not choose nationalities."

Sina, another character, is not human at all but rather a wise honeybee banished from his hive. Humans have long had a special relationship with bees. In ancient Egyptian mythology bees were believed to be born from the tears of the sun god Ra, while the Koran includes passages about the healing power of honey and the teamwork of bees, intended to set an example for mankind on the value of working together. Sina intuitively understands the importance of togetherness and community, necessary attributes for happy hive living, for making honey and for natural migration: "The pleasure one receives in solitary flight seemed to him only a pale shadow when compared to this group voyage." Sina's message overall seems to be one of tolerance.


Hamid Ismailov, Uzbek author of 'Of Strangers and Bees'

Then there is the Stranger, who is catapulted to various medieval cities. In Florence he ponders Botticelli, singling out one painting in particular, *The Outcast.* He also visits Istanbul during the Tulip era, admiring Topkapı Palace and musing on Janissaries, dervishes and the poet Nadim. He particularly enjoys the sleep-inducing glories of a warm hamam during a windy Istanbul winter:

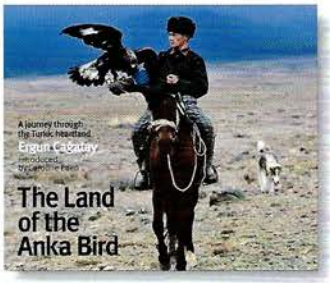
"Then the steam rose and warmed his flesh straight through to his bones, and it softened his whole body... and there, wrapped in a blanket, he slept like the dead." But who is the hamam-loving Stranger? Is he Avicenna himself, wandering in the world, or is he the workings of Sheikhov's mind, his daydreams and fantasies? Exile – and its associated feelings of transience, longing, hope and fear – connects all three characters.

Shiekhov, like Ismailov, knows that the culture of his homeland, Uzbekistan, remains concealed within the world, a "distant legend". Even those who claim to know usually come up short, as Sheikhov finds out in Paris: "By complete chance you encounter a particular professor, for example, and are surprised to learn he has been interested in Uzbekistan for a long time – that is to say, he is an amateur collector of traditional long-necked pitchers."

Yet, positioning Uzbekistan, and wider Central Asia, as a place apart in the world, somewhere too exotic, too unknowable, is a tired trope. Ismailov masterfully addresses this by having his characters approach the world from an unapologetically Uzbek perspective, and in doing so positions the Western reader as the "stranger". The years in the book are based on the Hijri calendar. Uzbek singers, barely known to the outside world, such as Munajat Yulchiyeva, are namechecked, as is the Turkic Sufi poet Hoja Ahmad Yassavi, and likewise, it is up to the reader to acquaint themselves with the legend surrounding empire-builder Tamerlane's wife Bibi Khanum and her amorous architect. Few clues are handed out.

This brave whirlpool of new ideas presents valuable references and standpoints for the reader to get along with, a thrilling starting point for wider research and further reading. And the reason this challenging, boundary-pushing style works so well is because the reader, despite disorientation – the very feeling of exile – emotionally connects with all three of the characters, all of the time, a rare accomplishment in any piece of fiction, and the highlight of this singular book. ◆

Caroline Eden is the author of 'Samarkand' (2016) and 'Black Sea' (2019); cedentravels@gmail.com


A journey through the Turkic heartland
Ergun Çağatay
The Land of the Anka Bird

'The Land of the Anka Bird: a journey through the Turkic Heartland', by Caroline Eden, with photographs by Ergun Çağatay, will be published by Cornucopia Books in May 2020

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ISTANBUL THE ULTIMATE MUSEUM GUIDE

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Cornucopia Travel Guide
For further information about visiting the museums and their collections, visit
cornucopia.net/guide

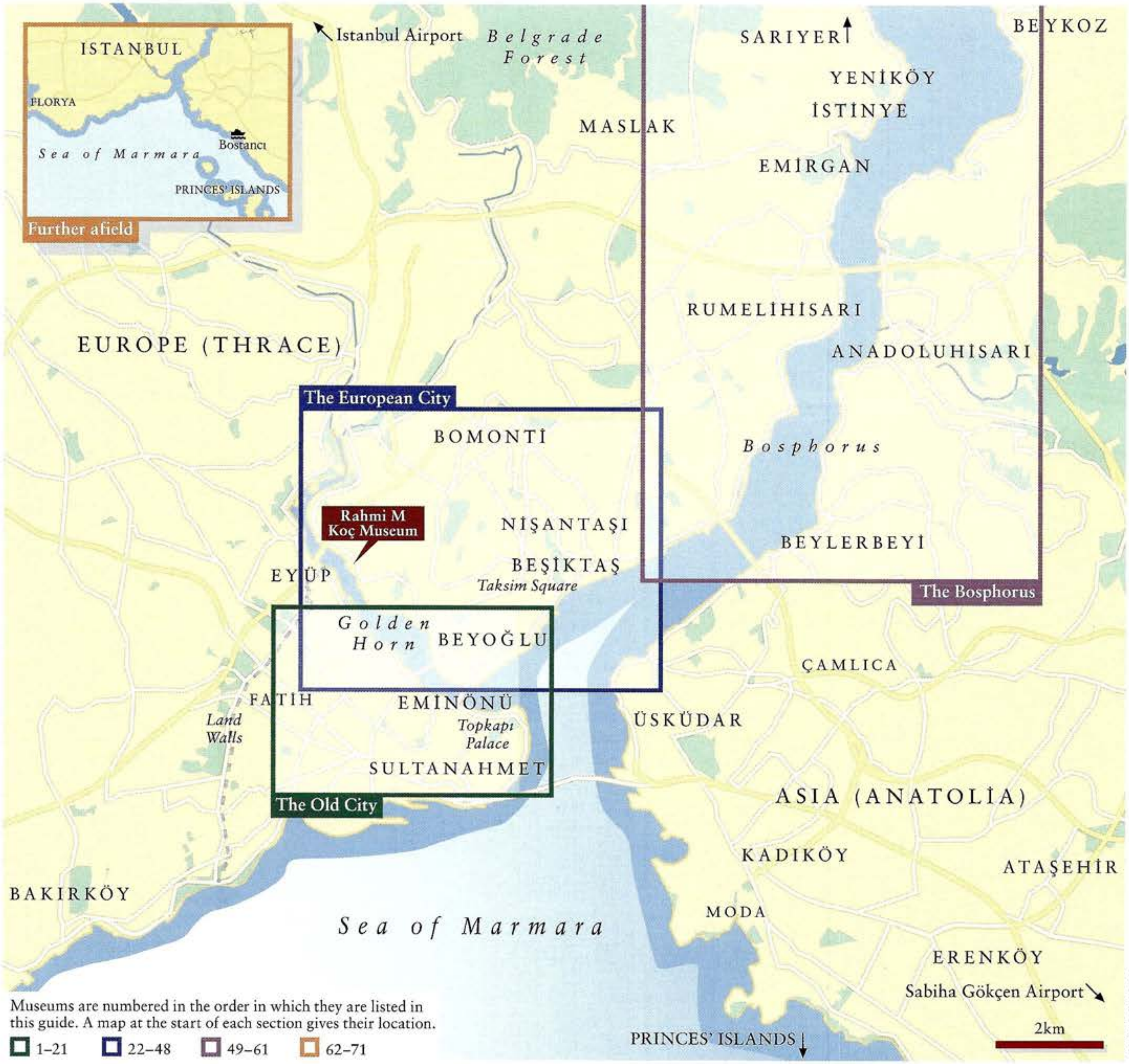
Backstreet art

In the Ayvansaray district of the Old City, a kindly pensioner sells highly coloured prints of Ayasofya and necessities such as tissues and shaving foam

MONICA FRITZ

Secrets of the city

To CELEBRATE OUR 60TH ISSUE we take a grand tour of Istanbul's treasures, firm favourites and well-kept secrets, the tried and tested and the weird and wonderful, venerable institutions and cutting-edge arts spaces. From Topkapı to Atatürk's Art Deco Sea Pavilion, Istanbul's attractions are explored across four areas: the Old City, the European City, the Bosphorus and Further Afield


ISTANBUL
FLORYA
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Bostancı
PRINCES' ISLANDS
Further afield
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Belgrade Forest
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BEYKOZ
YENİKÖY
İSTİNYE
EMİRGAN
RUMELİHİSARI
ANADOLUHİSARI
EUROPE (THRACE)
The European City
BOMONTİ
Bosphorus
Rahmi M Koç Museum
NİŞANTAŞI
BEŞİKTAŞ
Taksim Square
BEYLERBEYİ
The Bosphorus
EYÜP
Golden Horn
BEYOĞLU
ÇAMLICA
FATİH
EMİNÖNÜ
Land Walls
Topkapı Palace
ÜSKÜDAR
SULTANAHMET
The Old City
ASIA (ANATOLİA)
KADIKÖY
ATAŞEHİR
BAKIRKÖY
MODA
Sea of Marmara
ERENKÖY
Sabiha Gökçen Airport
PRINCES' ISLANDS
2km

Museums are numbered in the order in which they are listed in this guide. A map at the start of each section gives their location.

🟩 1–21 🟦 22–48 🟪 49–61 🟧 62–71

SUSANNA HICKLING

THE PRACTICALITIES You can find useful links to websites, books, and places to eat and stay in the Travel Guide section of cornucopia.net. Always start early for popular sights such as Ayasofya. Many places close on Monday, but don't despair if that's your one free day: the Topkapı closes on Tuesday, the Sadberk Hanım on Wednesday, and in summer Ayasofya opens seven days a week

The Old City Pages 54–103
In the museums quarter, see the Topkapı and Ayasofya, visit the Sultan's Lodge in the old port, and glimpse the Kariye on the Land Walls

Along the Bosphorus (European side) Pages 142–151
From exquisite calligraphy to period costumes and classic cars, share the passions of private collectors' museums

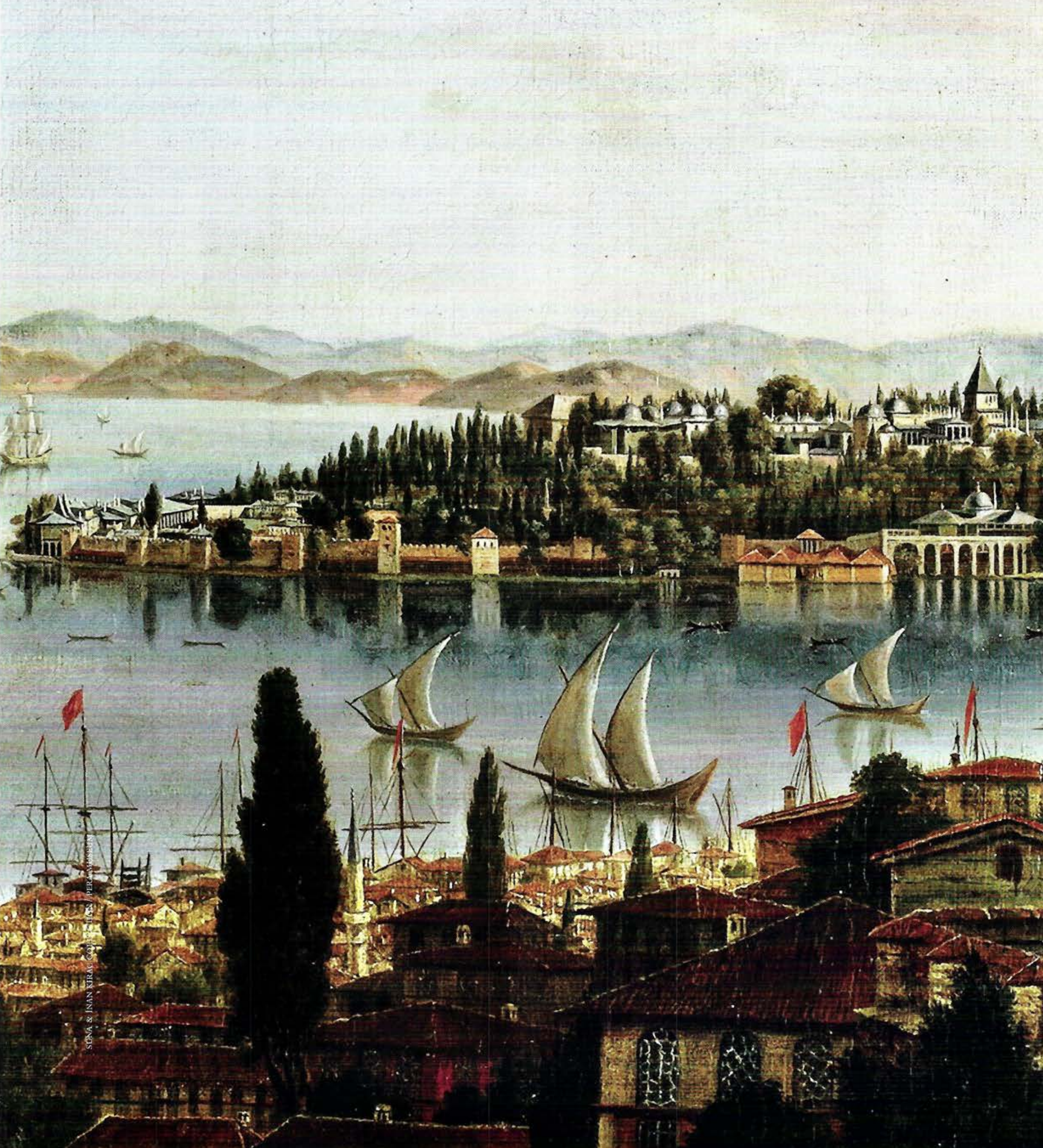
Further afield Page 156–161
From the world's most unlikely botanic garden to Atatürk's Art Deco lido and a beguiling toy museum

The European City Pages 104–141
See new art at Arter and Istanbul Modern in Beyoğlu, one man's quirky finds on the Golden Horn, and Dolmabahçe on the Lower Bosphorus

Along the Bosphorus (Asian side) Pages 152–155
Beylerbeyi, Küçüksu and Beykoz – the Asian shore offers three grand 19th-century palaces, the retreats of sultans, empresses and grand viziers

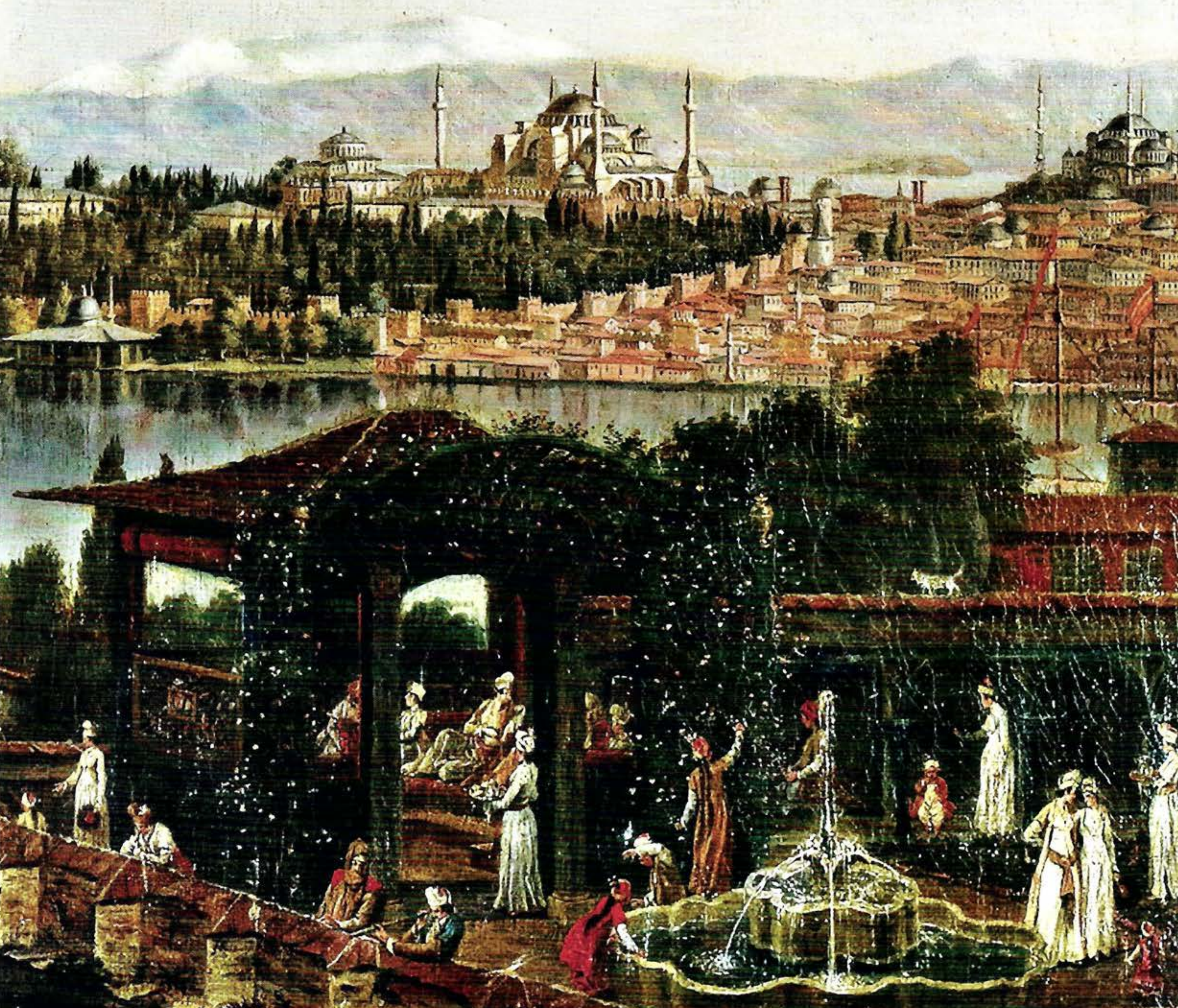
Not to be missed Page 124
The Mercedes belonging to the famous spy Cicero is among the astonishing fleet of vehicles at the Rahmi M Koç Museum

IN 1460, MEHMED THE CONQUEROR commissioned his 'New Palace' on high ground at the northernmost point of the old walled city of Byzantium, inspired, it is said, by Athens, which had fallen to his armies two years earlier. His new acropolis would be surrounded not by an arid plain, but by the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Much altered over centuries, in the reign of Mahmud I (1730–54) it



SUNA & INAN KIRAC COLLECTION / PERA MUSEUM

became known as Topkapı (Cannon Gate) Palace. There is no better place to begin an exploration of the Old City's finest museums, which will take us to the treasure troves that are the trio of Archaeological Museums, to the stupendous sixth-century basilica of Ayasofya, then onwards to the ancient Hippodrome and other, often hidden, wonders of the oldest part of Istanbul



Seraglio Point, by Antoine de Favray, 1773
The 18th-century panoramas in the Pera Museum still make the ideal preparation for any tour of Istanbul. This detail of a panorama by de Favray (213 cm wide) shows the meeting of worlds for which the city has always been famed. In the centre ground on the right, a cat walks along a wall as ladies while the time away in a garden kiosk of the French Embassy in Pera, modern Beyoğlu. Across the Golden Horn is the Topkapı. Gone are the ancient Byzantine sea walls, pulled down to make way for the new Orient Express, but the palace itself, and the 6th-century silhouettes of Ayairini and Ayasofya, echoed in the 17th-century Blue Mosque (far right), remain just as captivating

A 21st-century stroll through the walled grounds of the Topkapı
Miraculously, the leafy outer gardens of Topkapı Palace still survive. Herons nest in the plane trees shading this cobbled lane leading up from Gülhane Park to a terrace where a curious cluster of buildings houses the three Istanbul Archaeological Museums. Hidden by cypresses in Antoine de Favray's view (previous pages), the terrace is where Janissaries honed their horsemanship with the javelin game of *jereed*

MONICA FRITZ

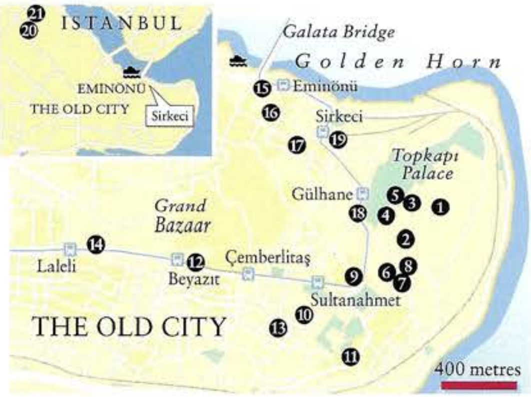
The Old City

In the core of Istanbul, all within ten minutes' walk of the ancient Hippodrome and Sultanahmet, are Istanbul's four major historic sites, the Topkapı, Ayasofya, the family of Istanbul Archaeological Museums and the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, plus gems such as the Carpet Museum and the Museum of the Great Palace Mosaics. Take the tram two stops either way from Sultanahmet to find the oldest grand hamam, literary museums, and the sumptuous Sultan's Lodge

The museums quarter of the Old City was always hard to get to by car, but you can now go by tram from the European City, where many visitors stay. To get a grasp of the city's layout, see it from the water: take a ferry from the docks of Eminönü to Üsküdar, say, or Kadıköy, or up the Golden Horn.

The Old City is also a good launching point for other areas covered in this guide. From Eminönü you can take a ferry up the Bosphorus or out to the Princes Islands (see www.sehirhatlari.istanbul for schedules). The M2 metro will take you to Beyoğlu and beyond. And the Marmaray metro line, with its station at Sirkeci, links distant suburbs on both sides of the Bosphorus.

All transport, bar taxis, *dolmuşes* and minibuses, must be paid for with an Istanbul Kart available from machines at tram or metro stops (several people can use each card).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⑳
ISTANBUL
EMINÖNÜ
THE OLD CITY
Sirkeci
Galata Bridge
Golden Horn
⑮
Eminönü
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Sirkeci
⑲
⑰
Topkapı Palace
Gülhane
⑤
③
①
⑱
④
②
Grand Bazaar
⑭
Laleli
⑫
Beyazıt
Çemberlitaş
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Sultanahmet
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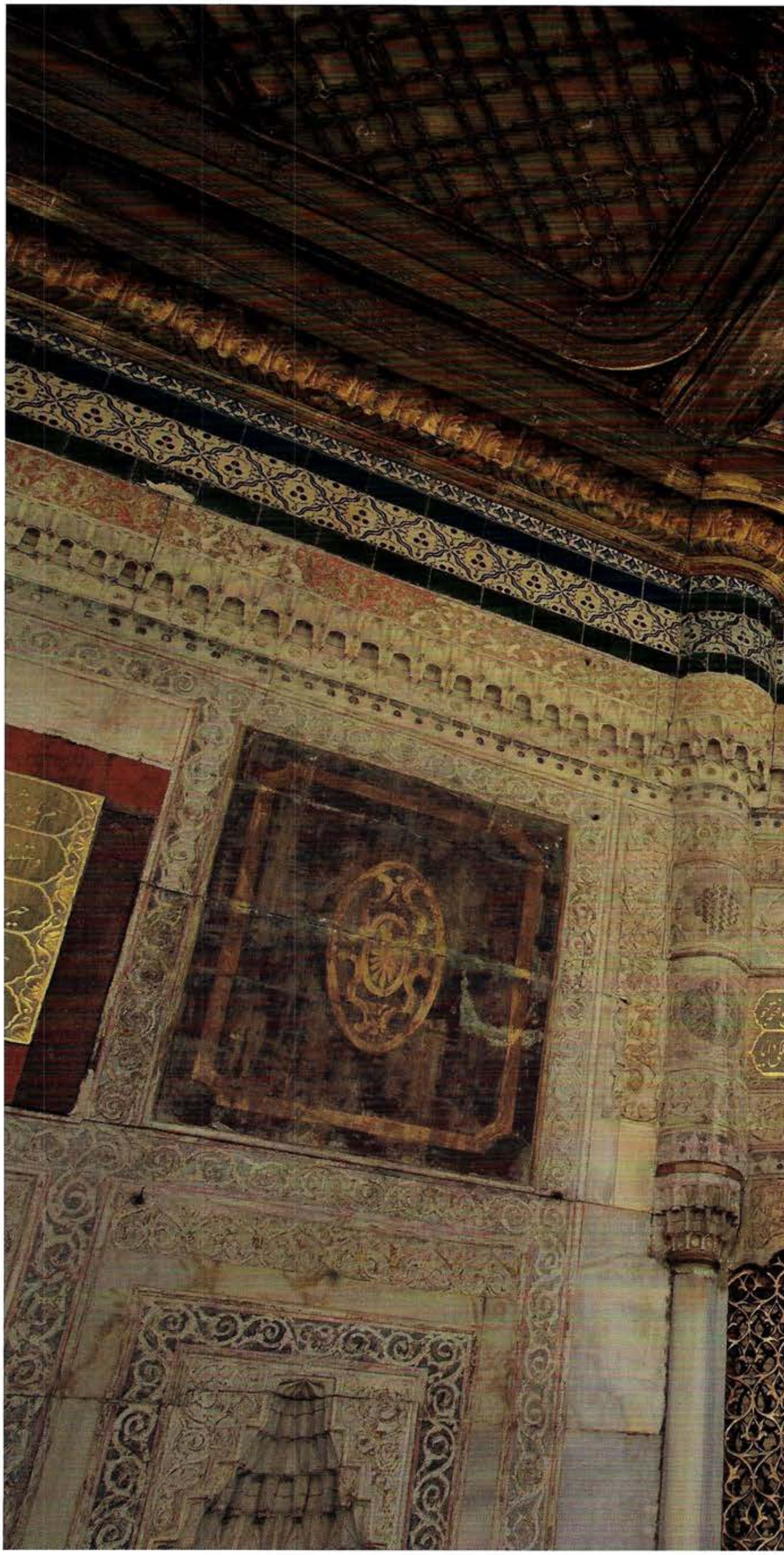
THE OLD CITY
⑪
400 metres



Right The Ahmed III Fountain, 1728. Behind it is the 6th-century Ayasofya

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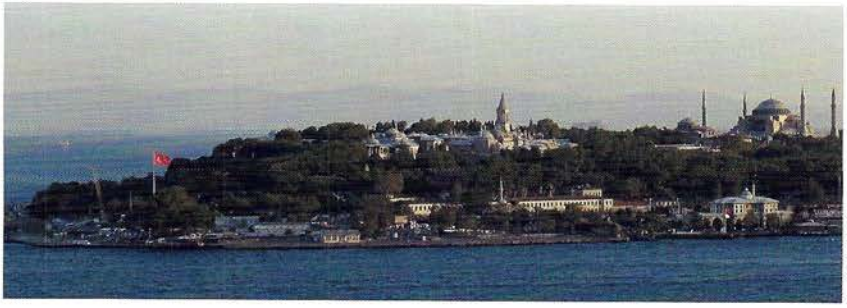
Topkapı Palace

The residence of sultans and administrative centre of the state, Topkapı Palace would eventually dwindle in importance, but for 400 years the site remained the most powerful yet enigmatic in Europe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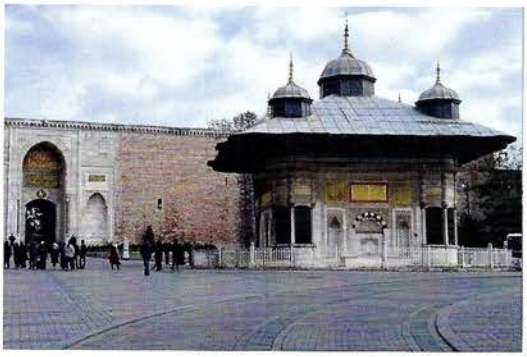
The seat of Ottoman power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1 Topkapı Palace Museum

The joy of the Topkapı is both what it is and where it is – think of your visit as a stroll in the park as well as a treasure hunt. If time is short, even an hour is enough to give you the sense of an astonishing conjuring trick. Though the collection is fiercely guarded and largely out of sight, vast emeralds, one of the world's largest cut diamonds, a hoard of Chinese porcelain, exquisite kaftans, talismanic shirts bearing a thousand prayers, and walls of glimmering Iznik tiles all await

Don't expect a single monumental edifice, rather a series of courtyards with gates, pavilions, arcades and gardens that lead to terraces with fabulous views. With the sea on three sides, the Topkapı is an oddly restful place. Wander the grounds, bask in the sun or retreat to a shady corner to read.

The book to choose, if you can find it, is *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, by Gülru Necipoğlu: find out how the Conqueror's New Palace was his vision of a world empire in microcosm.

Buy a ticket in the First Court, where a café under the plane trees serves the rosewater-laced milk pudding *su muhallebisi* next to the 6th-century church of Ayairini. In the Second Court, power draws you like a magnet through cypresses to the Imperial Council Chamber in the palace proper. Behind is the unmissable Harem, a maze of more courtyards and corridors.

The Third Court's Hall of Petitions was once the final stop for foreign envoys. Happily, you can continue: in the final, Fourth Court, revive yourself in the Konyalı restaurant. But you must leave before the sun burnishes the Golden Horn, a relic of a time when only the sultan could watch the sunset here.

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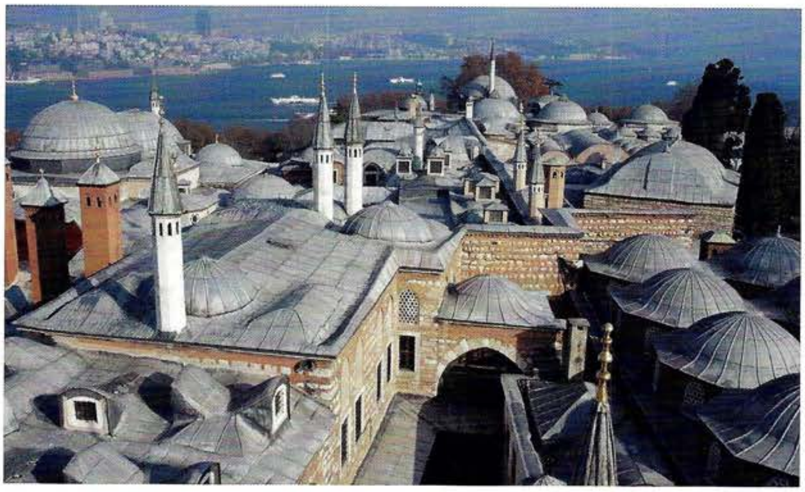
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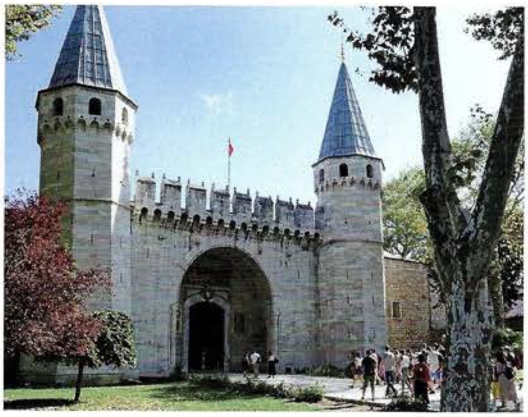
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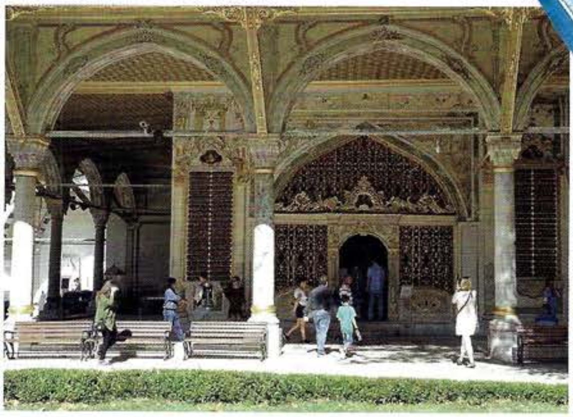
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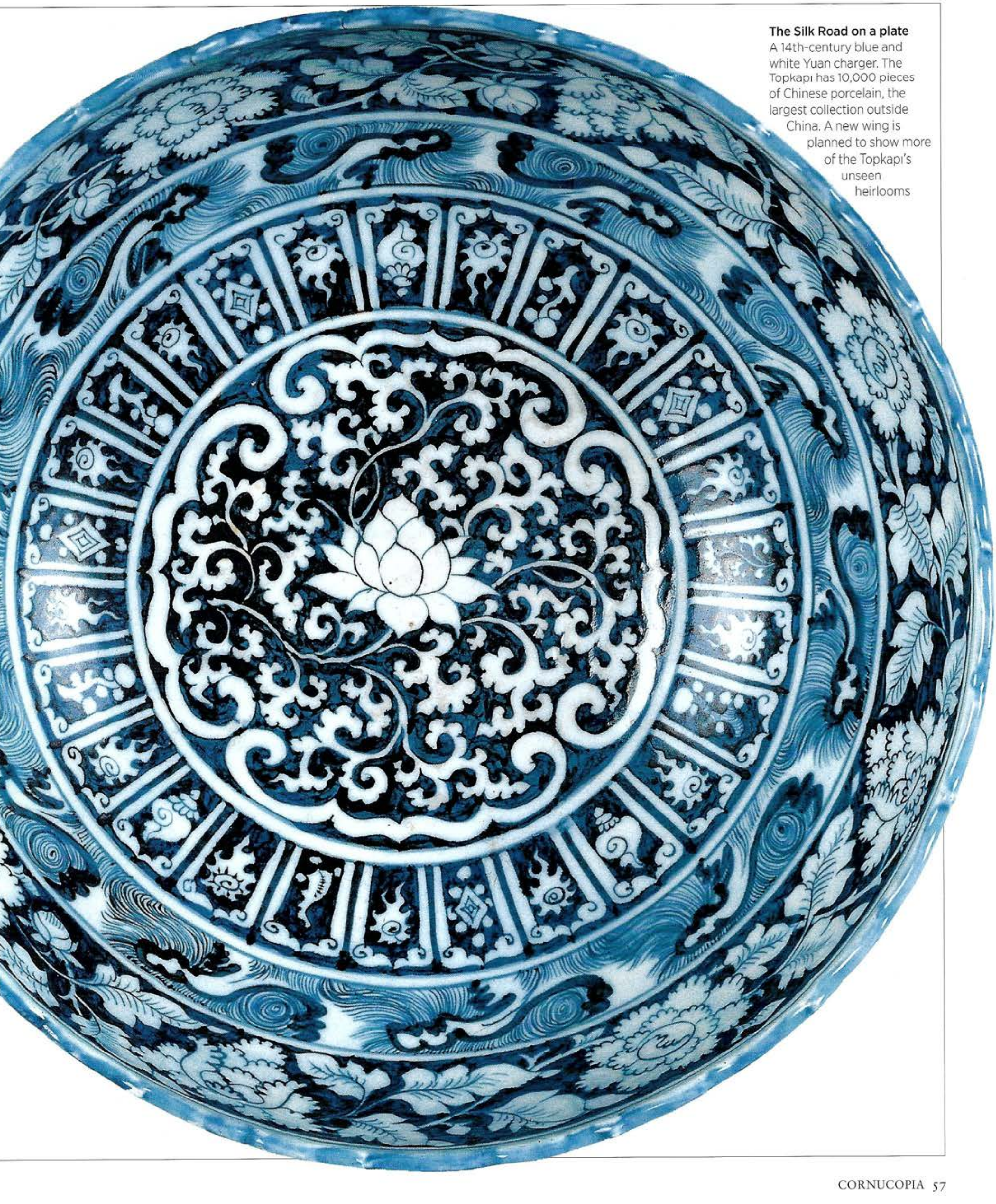
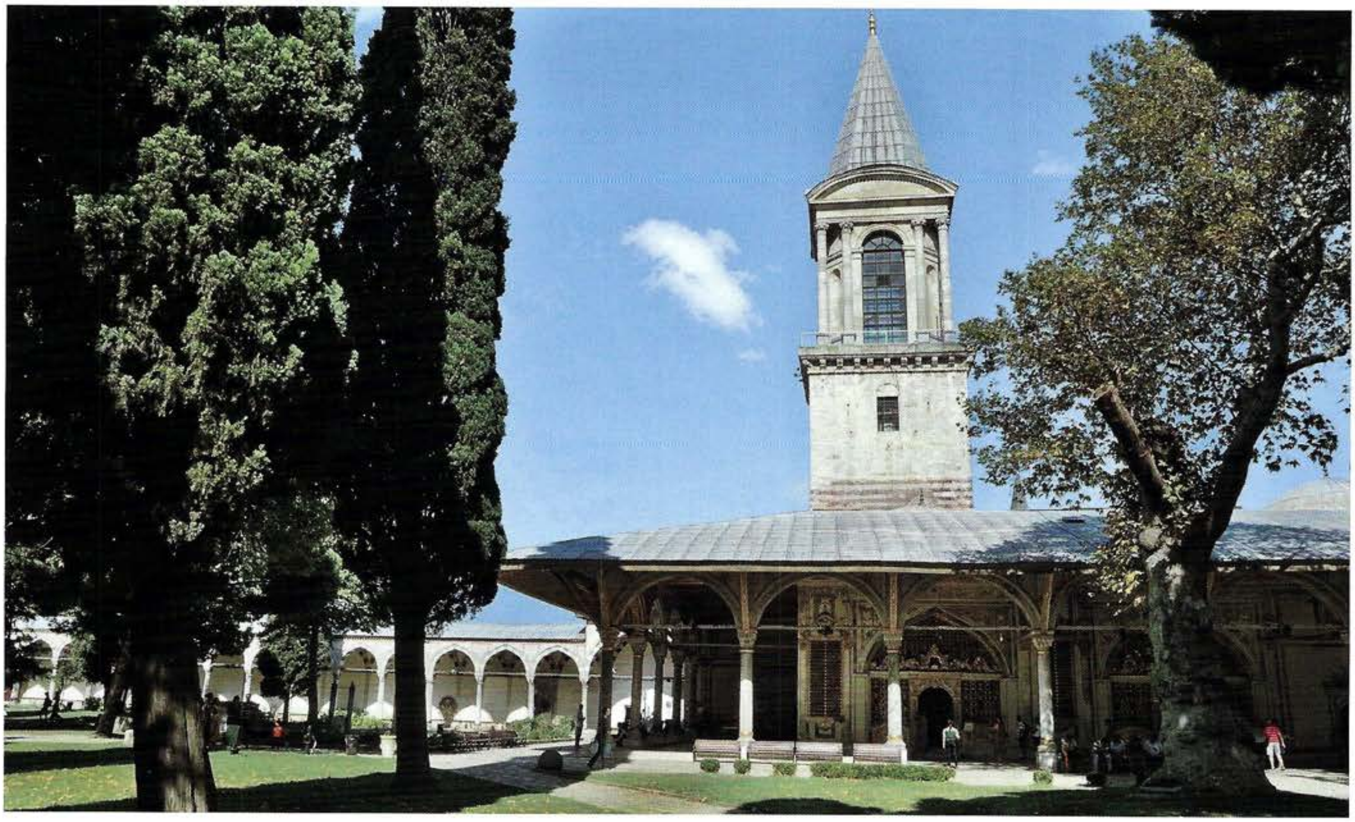
Far left: The entrance to the First Court The highly ornate Fountain of Ahmed III, typical of the Tulip Period, stands in front of the palace's Imperial Gate **Above** The palace and Ayasofya captured from across the Golden Horn. The Harem chambers cluster under the tall Tower of Justice **Left** Looking across the Harem domes to the Bosphorus **Below left** The Gate of Salutation, with its conical towers, leads from the First Court to the palace proper **Below** The Imperial Council Chamber, in the Second Court, is where viziers assembled and the sultan eavesdropped



The Silk Road on a plate
A 14th-century blue and white Yuan charger. The Topkapı has 10,000 pieces of Chinese porcelain, the largest collection outside China. A new wing is planned to show more of the Topkapı's unseen heirlooms



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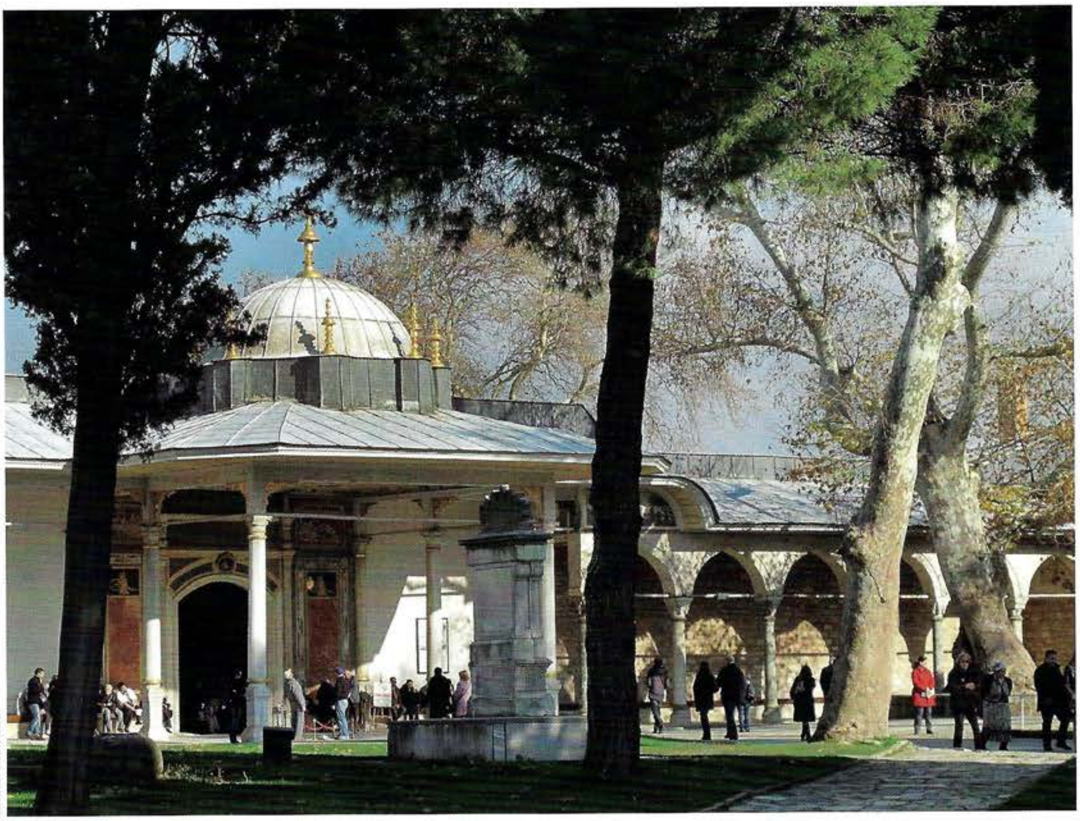


BERRIN TOROLSAN

Second Court
The Council Square
Laid out in the 15th century by Mehmed the Conqueror, this was the Empire's administrative heart

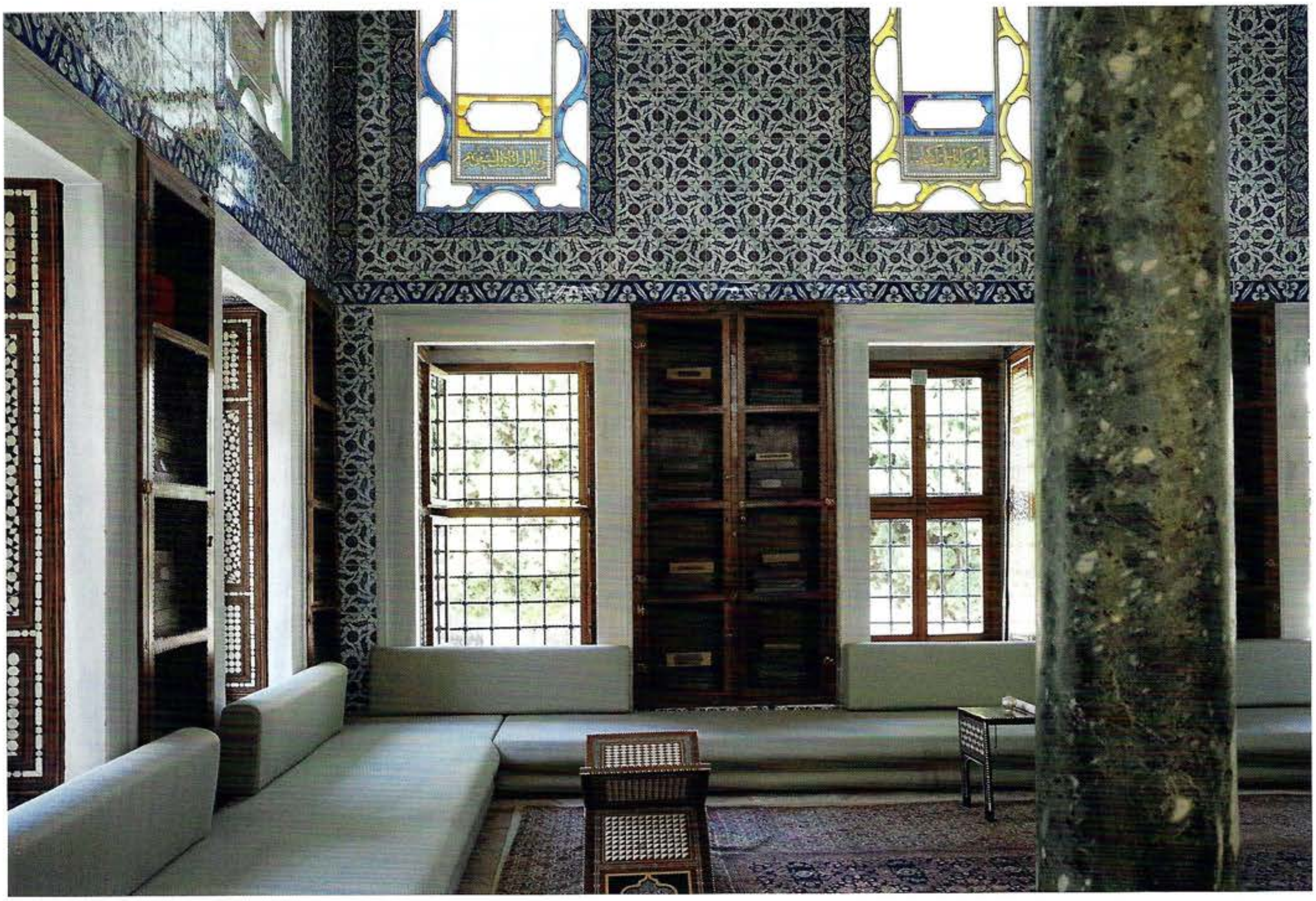
Opposite, top The Imperial Council Chamber (Dîvan-ı Hümâyûn), where viziers assembled. In the Tower of Justice above, the sultan could listen in on meetings and end them by rapping his sceptre on the iron grille he sat behind

Left The domed portico of the Gate of Felicity served as a ceremonial throne room

Third Court
Court of the Palace School
The Third Court housed the Palace School (for training servants of empire), the Hall of Petitions, the Treasury and the Sacred Relics, including the Prophet's Mantle

Opposite, bottom
At the centre of this court is Ahmet III's 1718 library

Bottom Walls of windows and Iznik tiles in the library

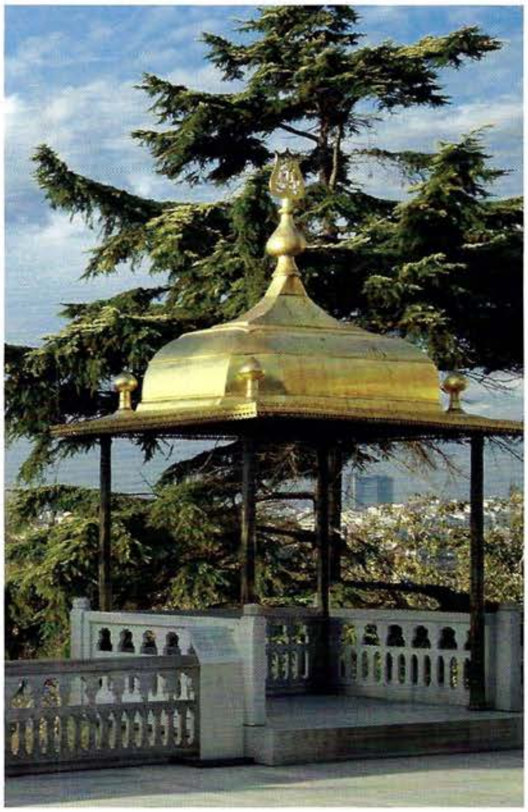


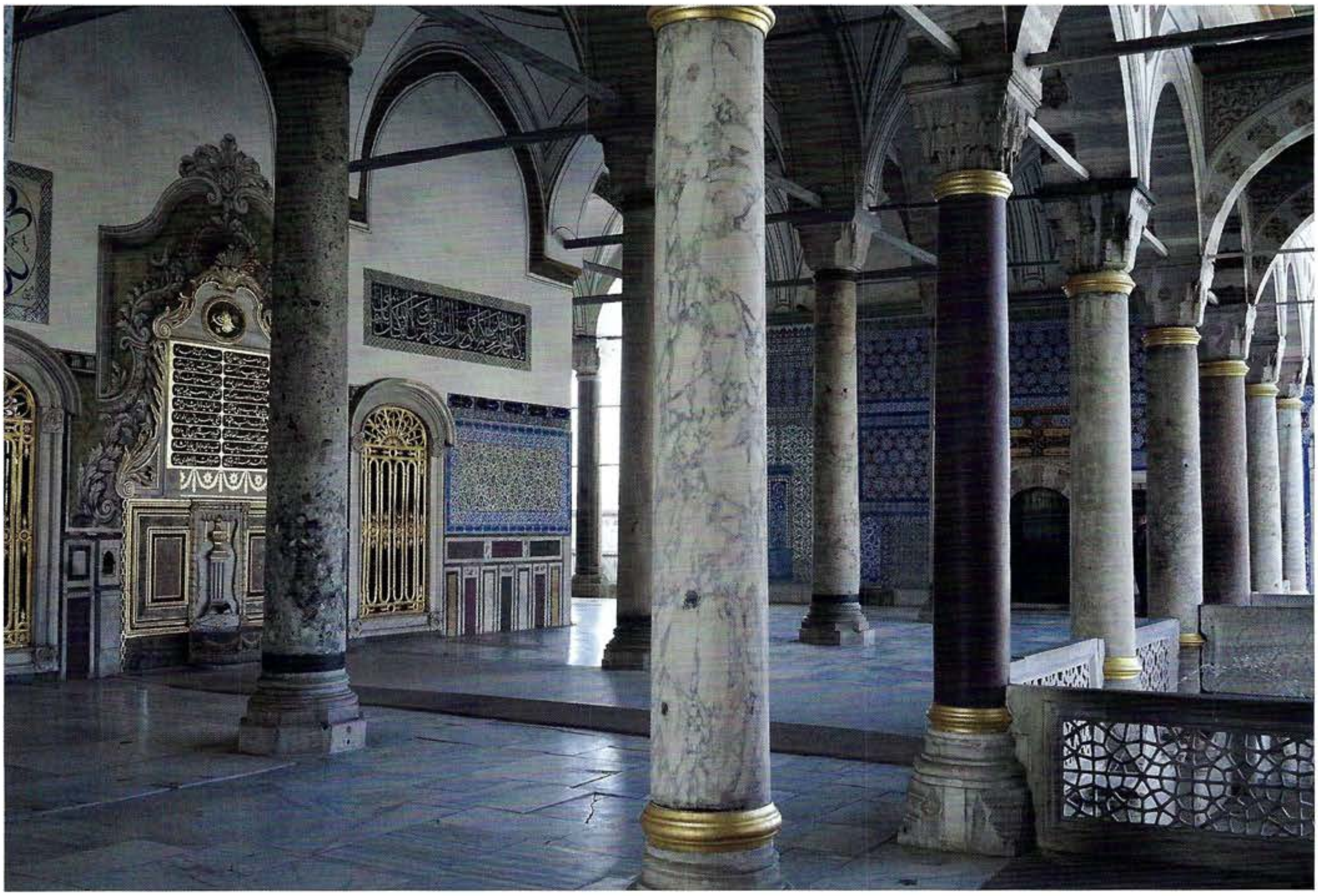
Fourth Court This court was both the sultan's inner sanctum and his window on the world. Positioned as it was at the end of the palace, it provided total privacy while affording views of the Bosphorus and cooling breezes, a garden filled with roses and tulips in which to indulge his love of flowers, and the Topkapı's most decorative pavilions

Below The Bosphorus seen from the Fourth Court

Right A 1640 gazebo on the terrace of the Hanging Garden, built by Süleyman the Magnificent. The sultans broke their fast there in Ramazan as the sun set over the Golden Horn

Bottom The colonnade of the Privy Chamber. Columns of many colours were brought to Topkapı in 1513 by Selim I after his conquest of Egypt





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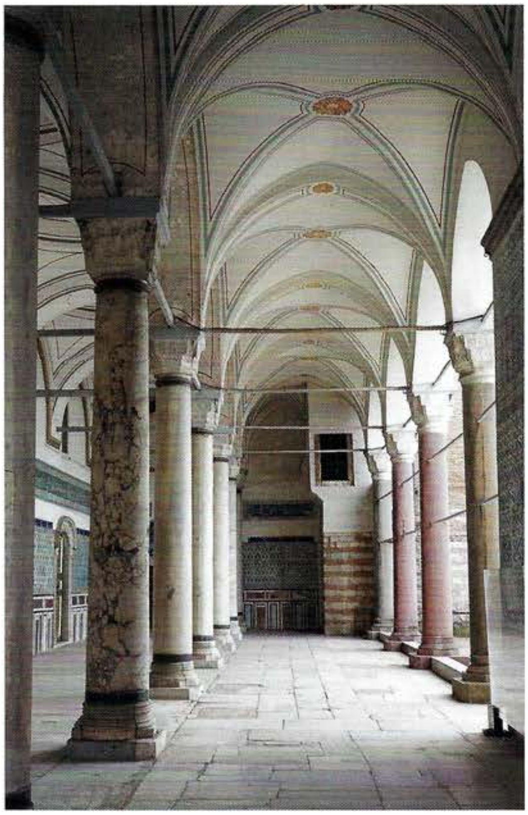
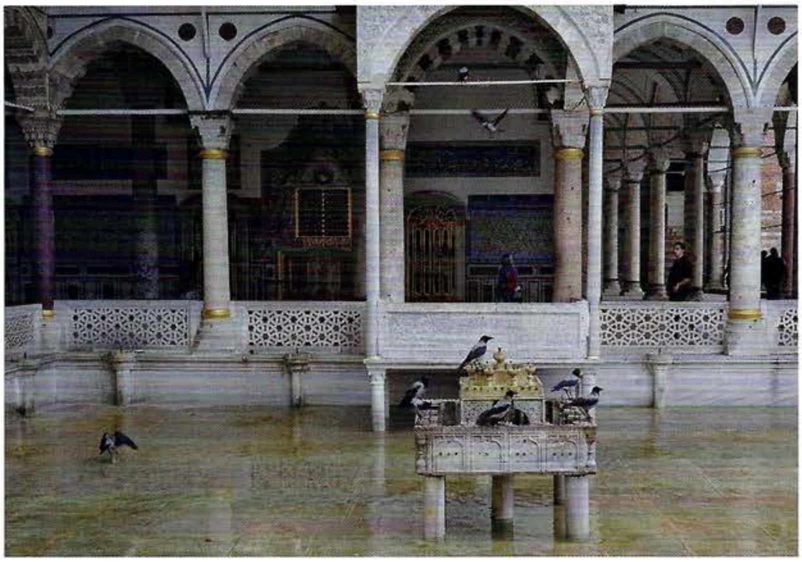
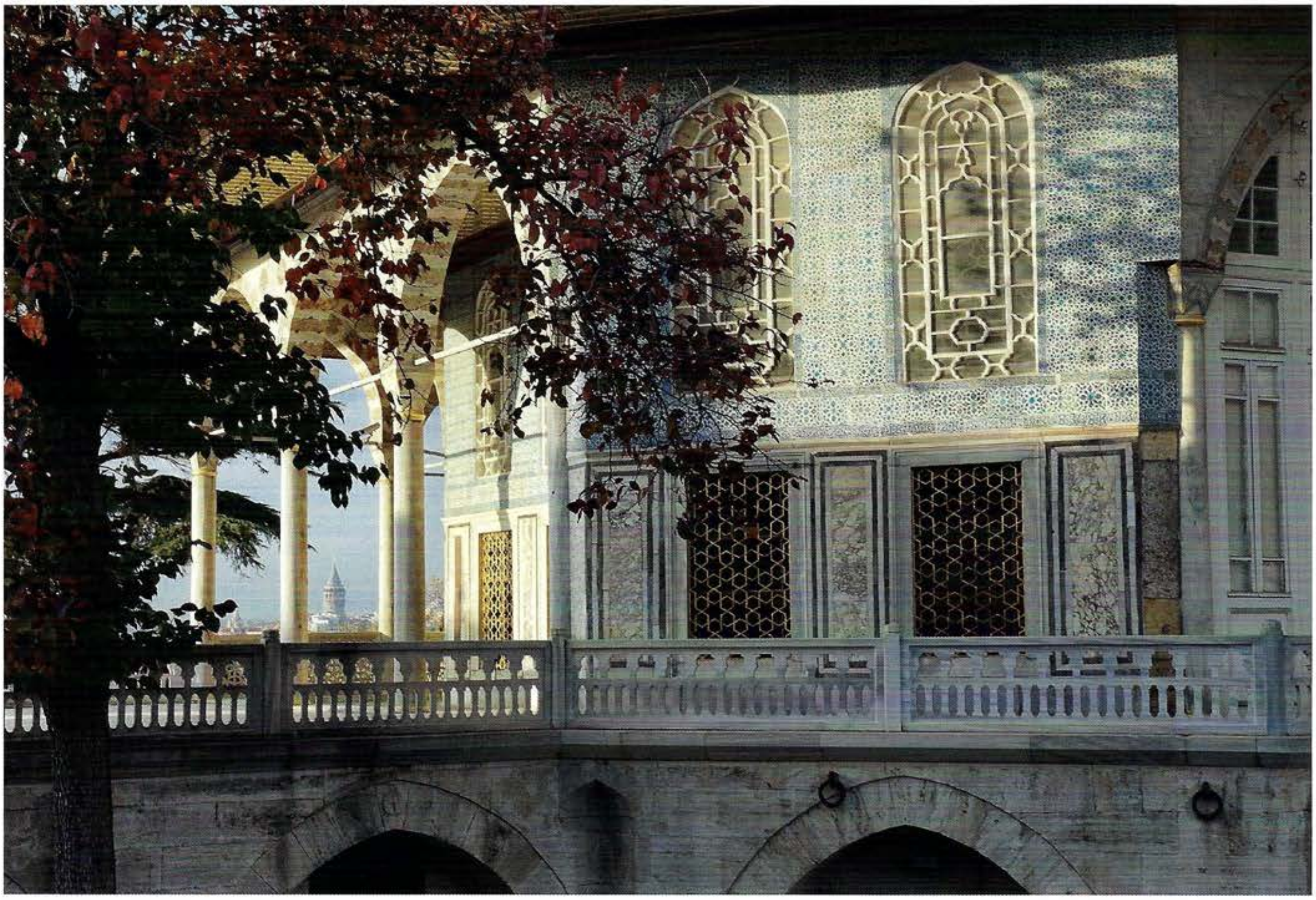


Left Mehmed the Conqueror was as much a Renaissance prince as an Eastern potentate. This vaulted arcade of recycled ancient columns, albeit with more pointed arches, would not have looked out of place in 15th-century Italy

Below Its wealth of exotic detail led to the Marble Pool, on the terrace of the Baghdad and Revan Kiosks, with its canopied throne, becoming a favourite Orientalist motif. The sea breeze made this the ideal court for a siesta in summer

Bottom Glowing in the evening sun, the Baghdad Kiosk is covered with lavish tiles and marble. This is one of three domed 17th-century pavilions on the terrace of the Hanging Garden, which was raised on arches for a better view

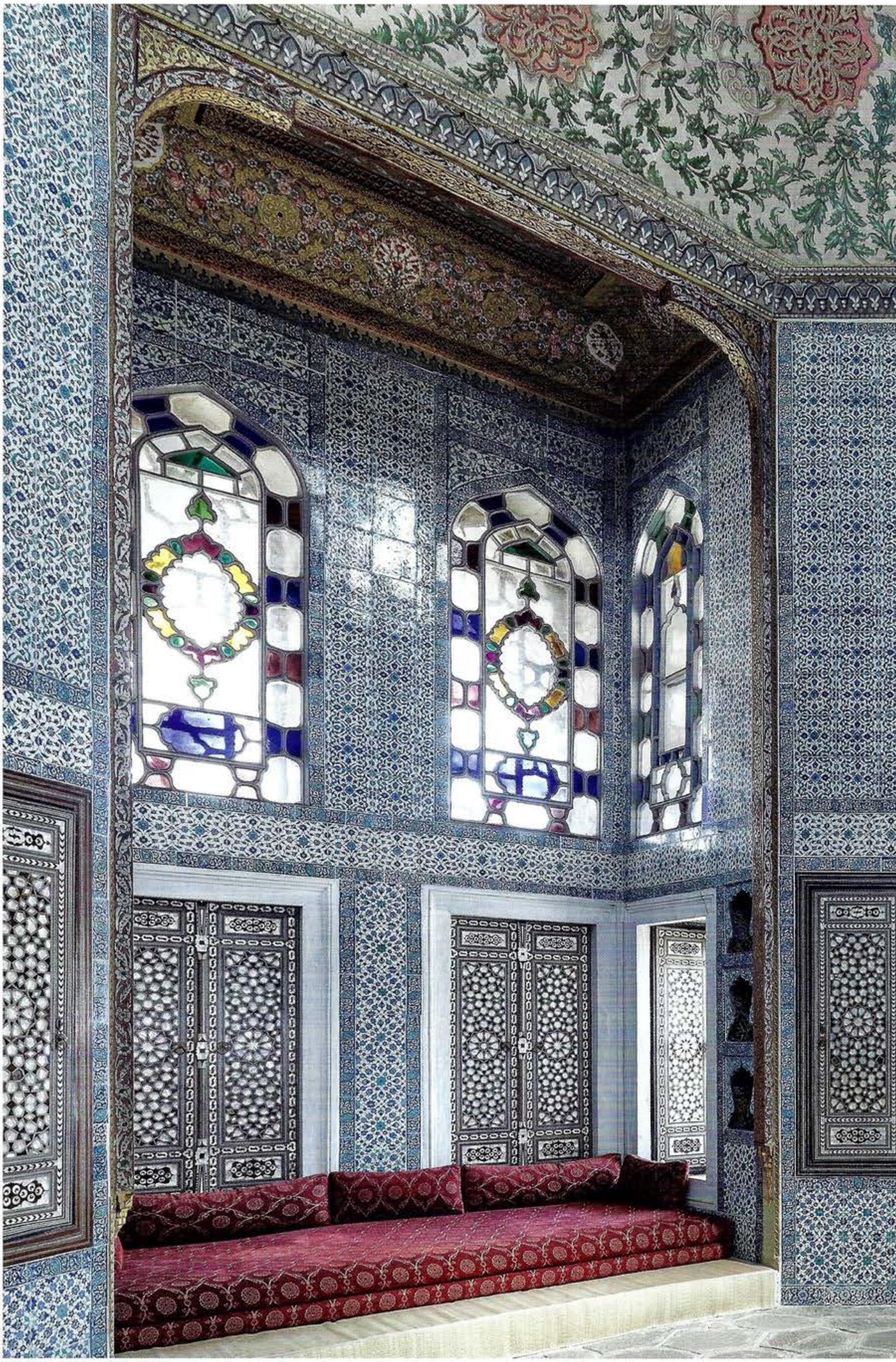




The Revan Kiosk

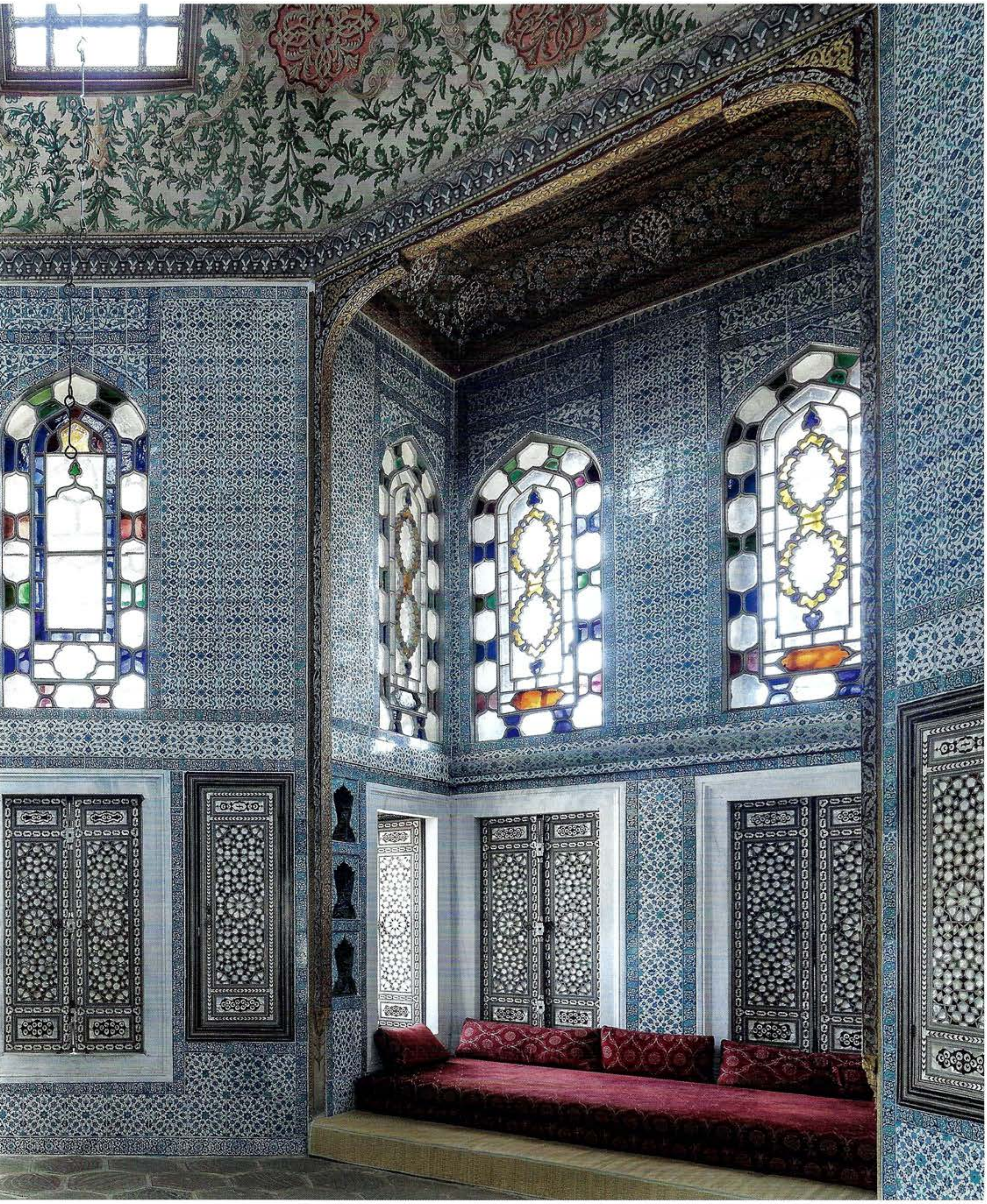
In this photograph Massimo Listri, co-founder of the illustrious art magazine *FMR*, captures the kaleidoscopic interior of the Revan (or Yerevan) Kiosk in the Fourth Court of the Topkapı. For many, this extraordinary octagonal pavilion, built in 1636 to celebrate the capture of Yerevan in modern-day Armenia, marks the culmination of any visit to the palace.

Besides its stunning looks, the kiosk served some useful functions. The sultans' turbans were stored here, and in the holy month of Ramazan the Sacred Relics – many brought back from Mecca and Medina at the start of the 16th century – were cleaned here by the sultans with their own hands. The pavilion was also noted for its collection of precious manuscripts, which continued to be added to through the 17th and 18th centuries. They are now kept in the Topkapı's venerable library.



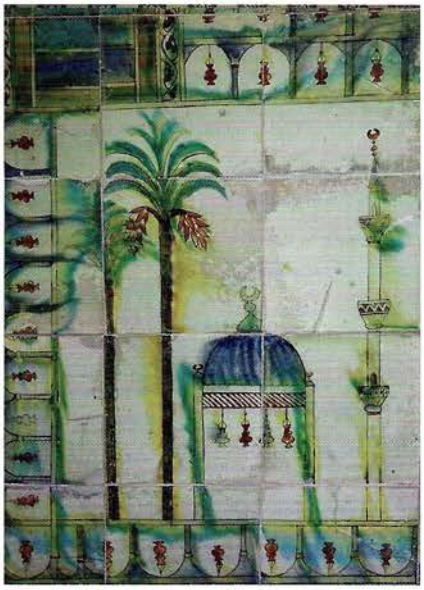
The Revan Kiosk in the Fourth Court, with its stained-glass windows, alcoves and velvet divans, is a tour de force of Ottoman decorative art. The walls are covered with blue and turquoise Iznik tiles; the cabinet doors and shutters of precious wood are inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell. The dome, by contrast, is painted with spirals of vivid green foliage

MASSIMO LISTRI

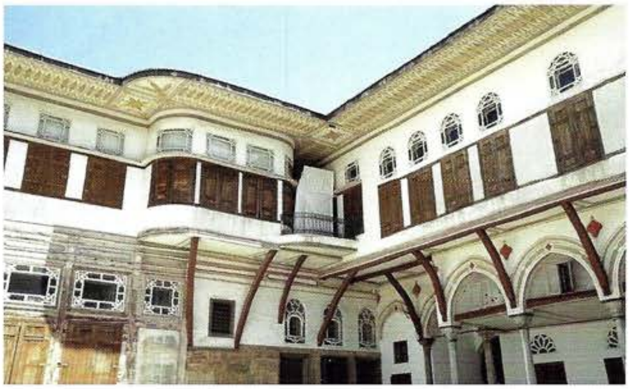


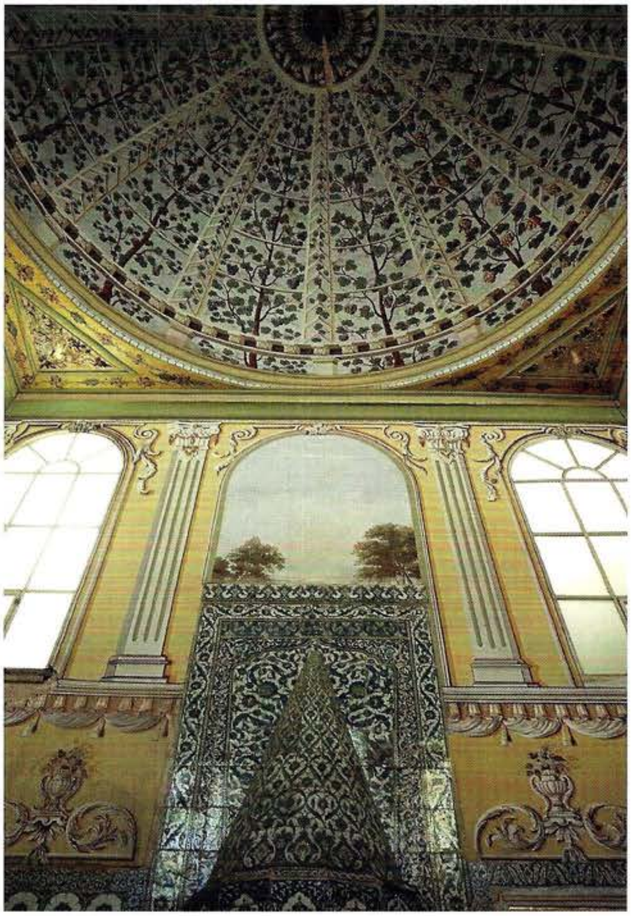
The Harem

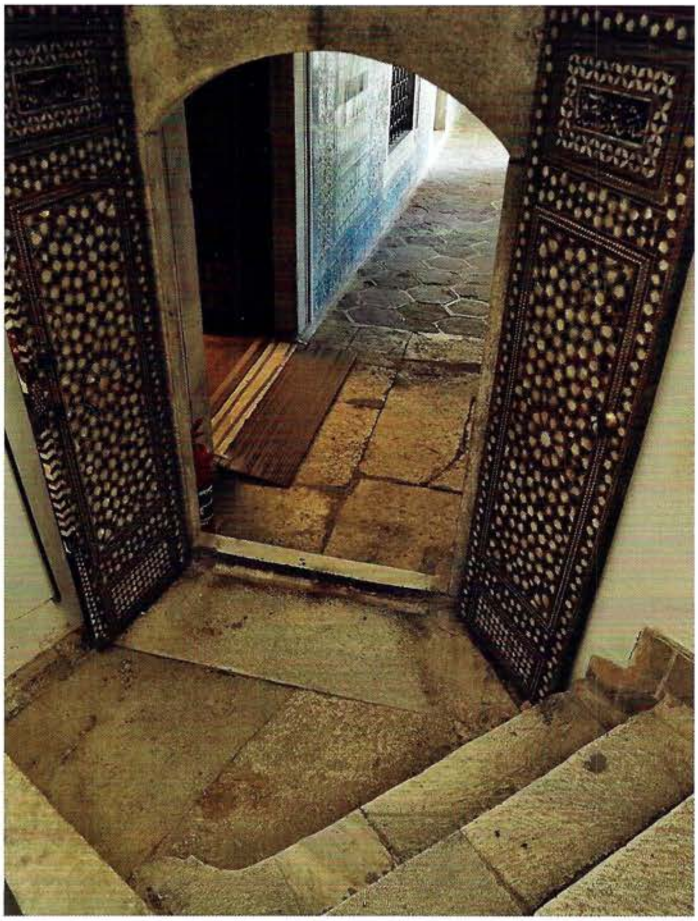
A baffling warren of pavilions, courtyards, staircases and corridors, the Harem is where the sultan lived with his wives, concubines and children – as well as the all-powerful Queen Mother. You must buy a special ticket at the entrance and are allowed to roam only in part of the huge, many-storeyed complex. Successive additions have darkened rooms that were once full of light, so the Harem is now cool in summer but numbingly cold in winter. Pity the poor guards.

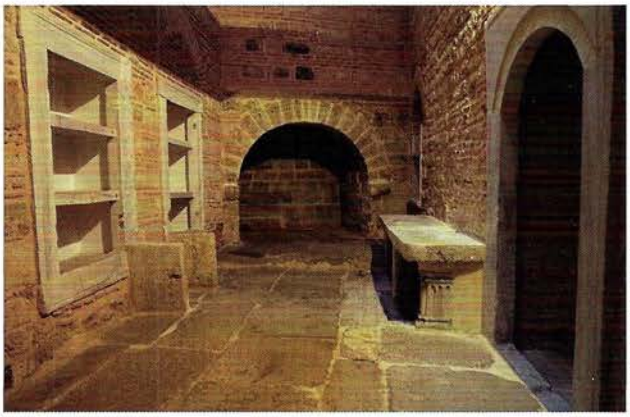


This page, clockwise from top left A charming gazebo festooned with lanterns in the Mosque of the Black Eunuchs, who guarded the Harem; the airy Quarters of the Sultan's Favourites, who also had views of the Golden Horn; the Queen Mother's chamber and the tiled conical hood of its tall fireplace; a Harem pantry; stairs leading down to a tiled court **Opposite page** Unusual tiles in one of the hamams; the Black Eunuchs' Courtyard

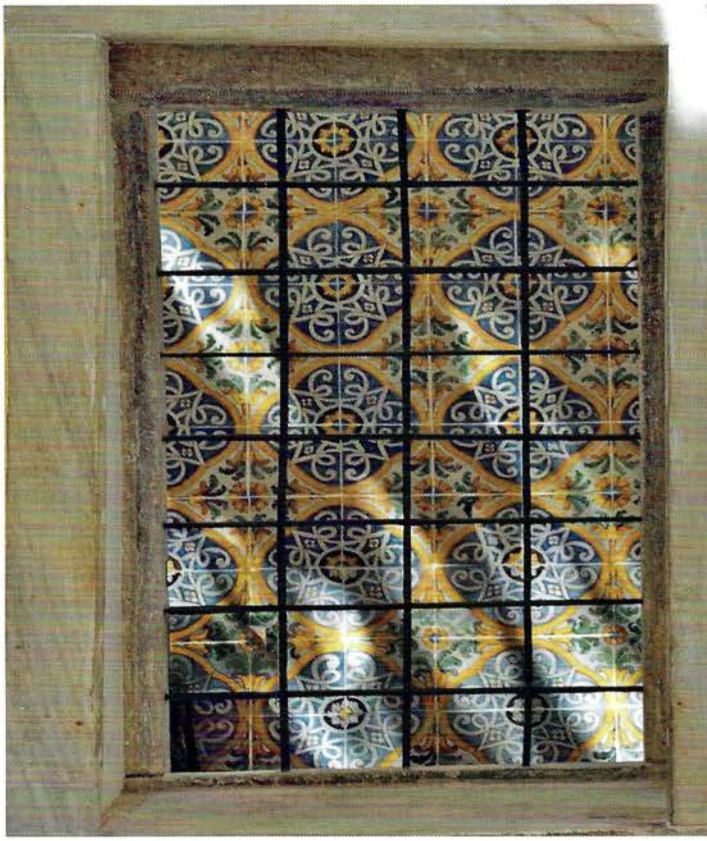


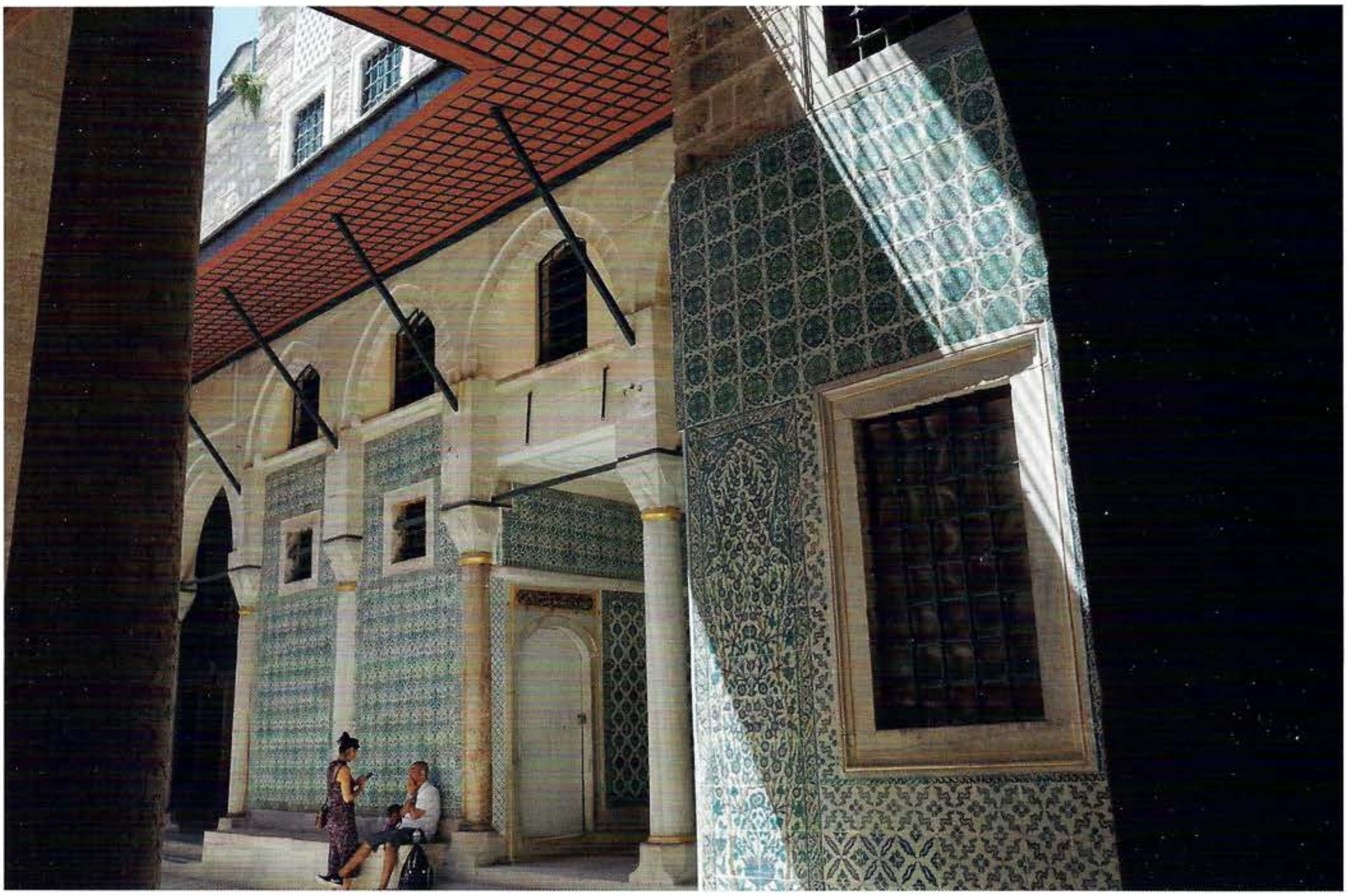






PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

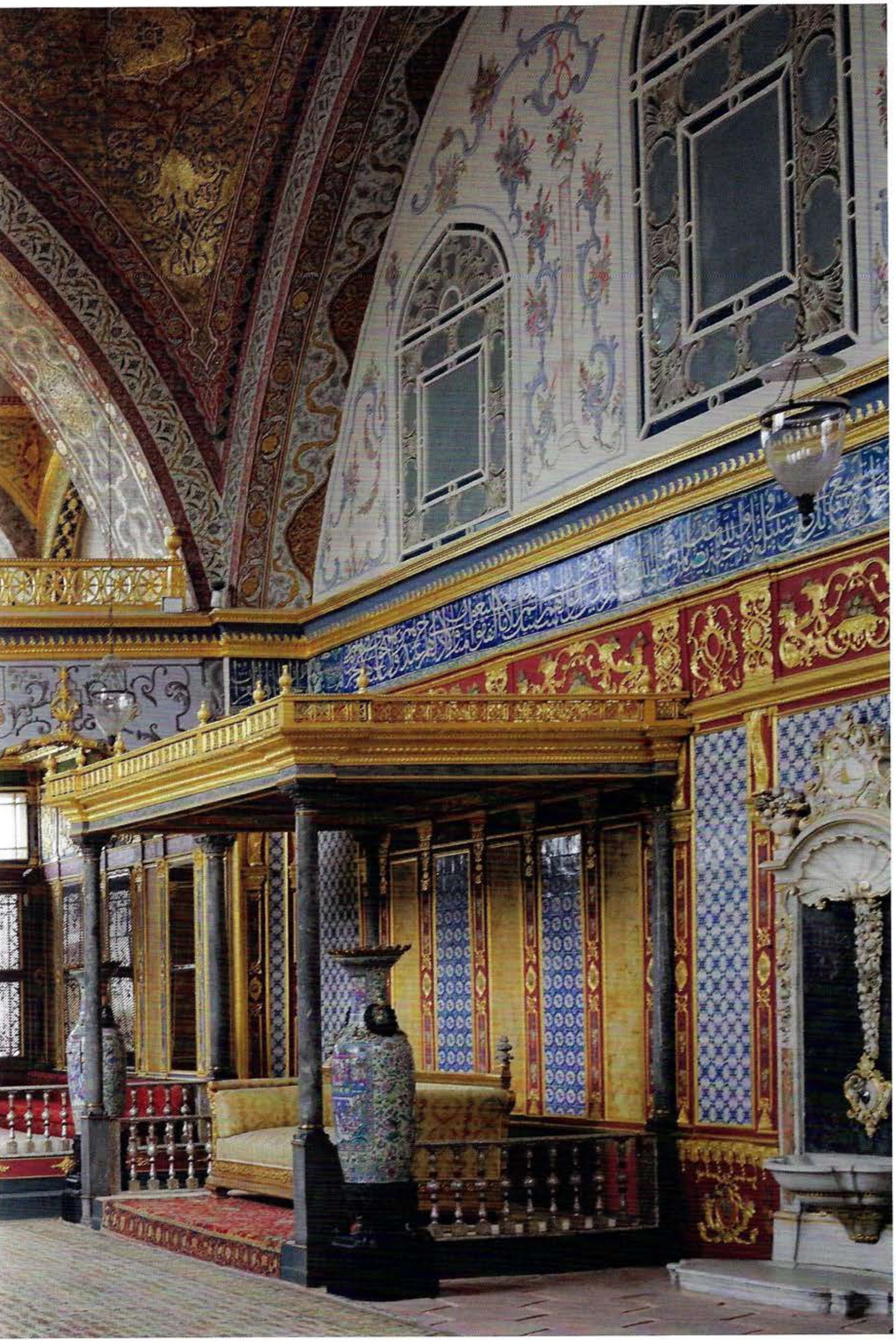




The Harem Throne Hall

A riot of styles, the theatrical Throne Hall (*Hünkâr Sofrası*), where musical events and celebrations were held, is one of the most highly decorated rooms in the Harem. Dating to the end of the 16th century, it was badly damaged in the fire that tore through the Harem in 1665.

Wildly differing decorative motifs are the result of repeated repairs and alterations since it was rebuilt, and of a sea change in taste in the 18th century, when Western Rococo designs became the fashion. A frieze of Iznik inscriptions and classical Ottoman painting in the ceiling are joined by heavy Baroque gilding, trompe-l'oeil frescoes and sober Delft tiles, which began to flood the Turkish market in the mid-18th century.



MASSIMO LISTRI

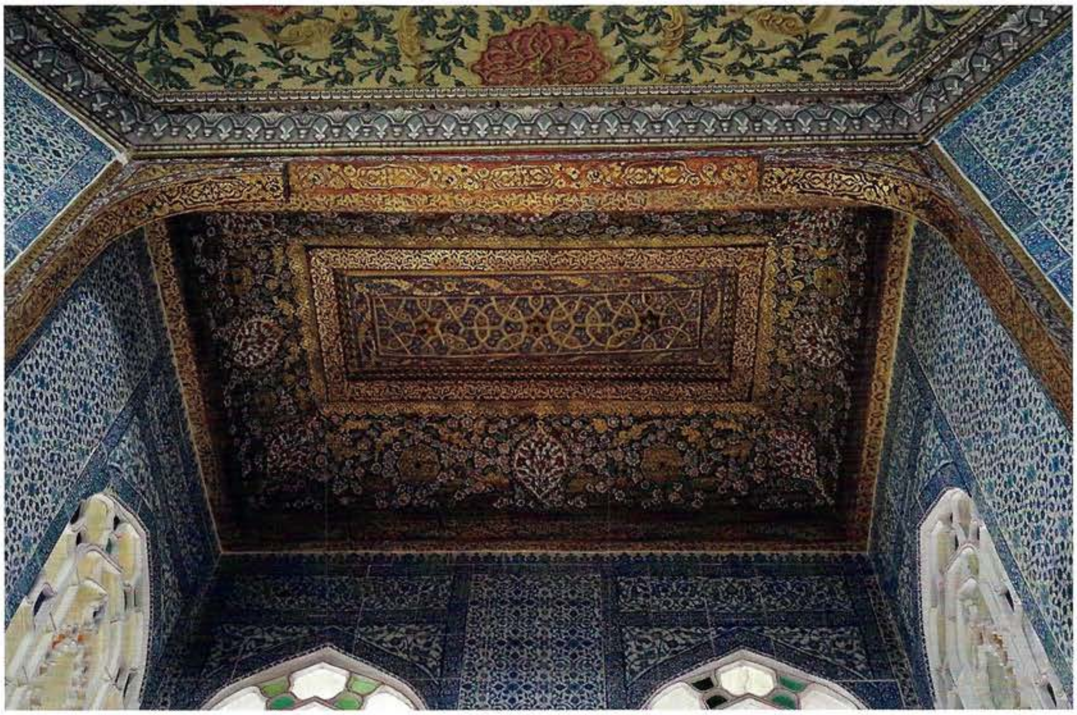
The characteristically Ottoman ceiling in the newly restored Throne Hall is reminiscent of Turkish carpets. It was discovered in the 1970s, during an earlier restoration by the architect Mualla Eyüpoğlu Anhegger. By contrast, a Rococo gallery is supported on spindly classical columns. The yellow sofa that served as the throne was a gift from Kaiser Wilhelm II and came to the Topkapı long after the sultan had moved from the Old City to new palaces on the Bosphorus. The huge Chinese Qing Dynasty vases flanking the dais date from the late 19th or early 20th century

Life's rich pattern

Right This alcove in the 1636 Revan Kiosk has a heavily gilded ceiling with both floral and geometric motifs, and walls of vivid Iznik tiles

Below The Apartment of the Crown Princes in the Harem is a floral extravaganza of 17th-century tiles

Opposite A detail from the talismanic shirt intended for Cem Sultan but never worn (the neck is still uncut). Begun, according to a Persian horoscope, at 'the 57th minute of the 4th hour' of March 30, 1476, its chintzed cotton is inscribed with magic formulae, verses from the Victory Chapter of the Koran and astrological symbols, but it could never protect the Conqueror's son. He lost his war of succession in 1480, dying from poisoning in exile, a hostage of the Pope



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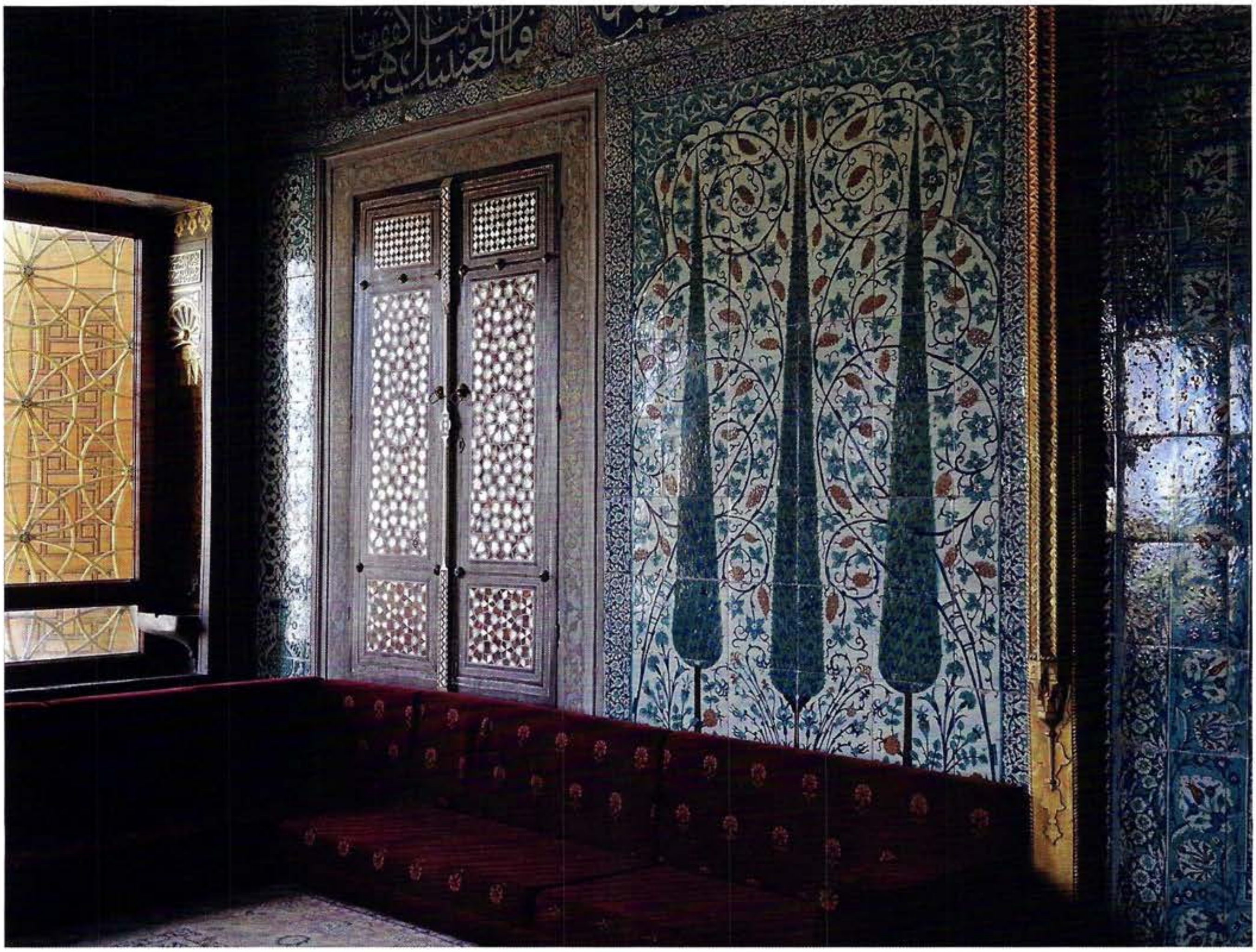
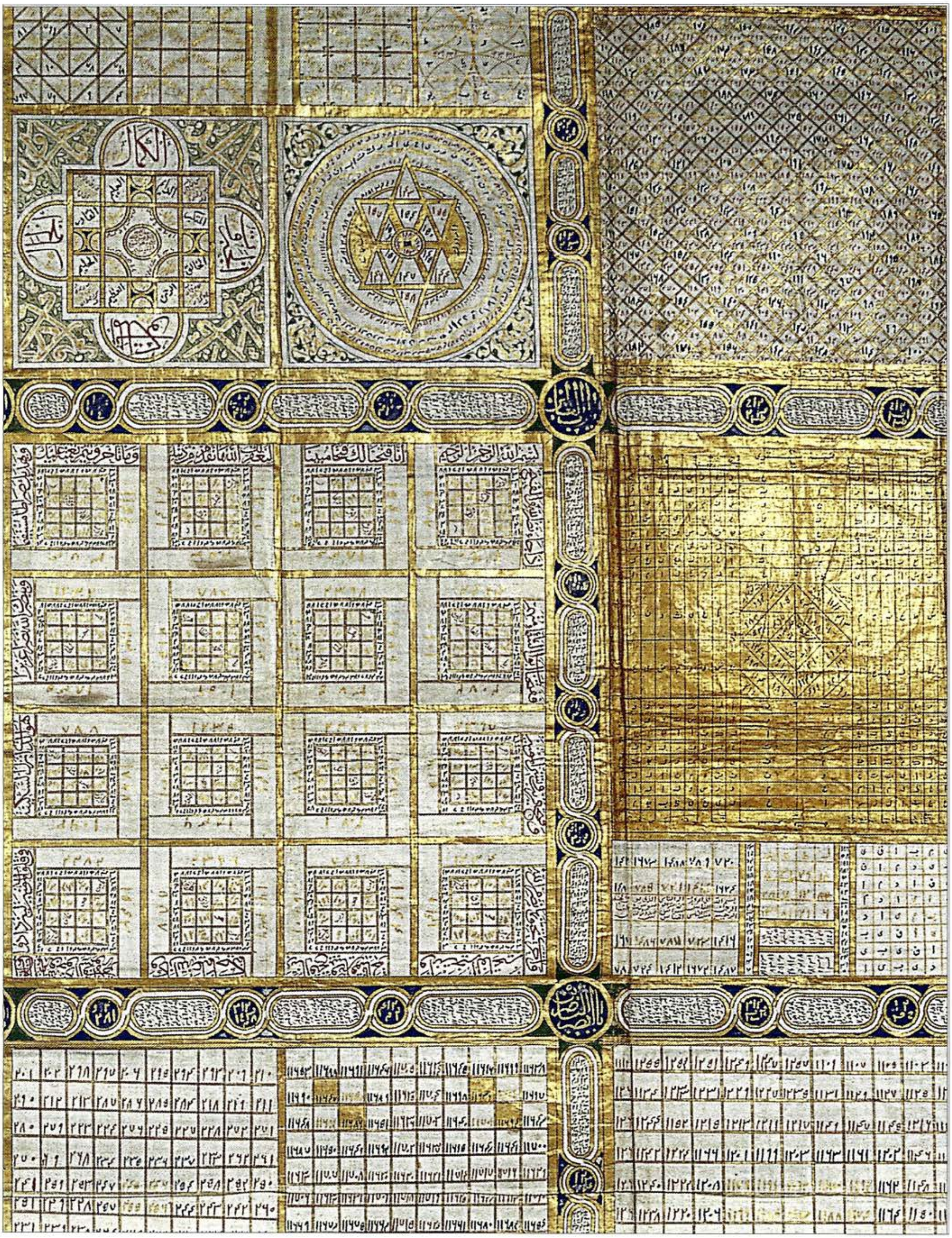


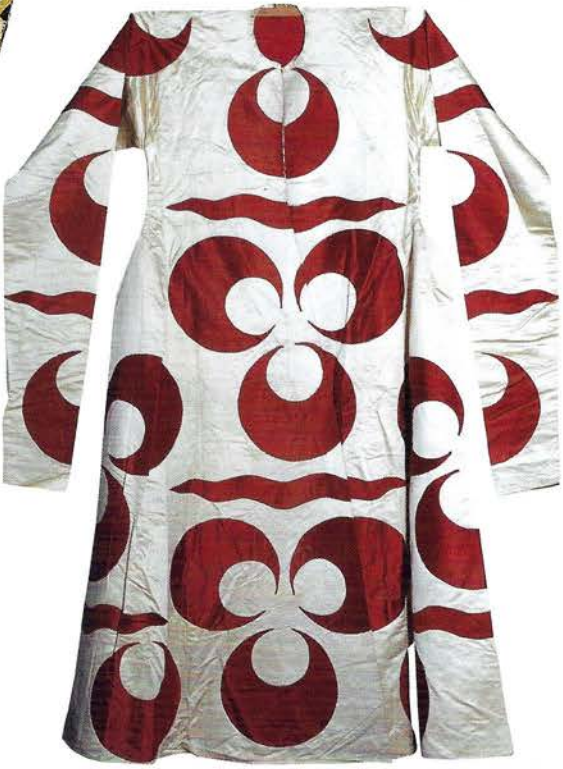
MONICA FRITZ

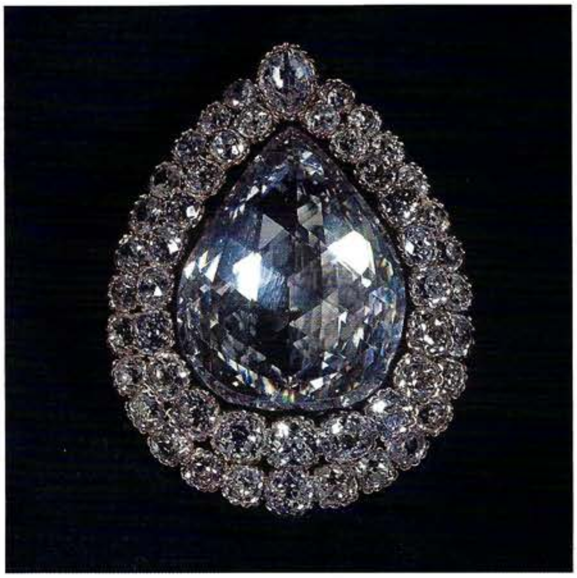


The power to dazzle

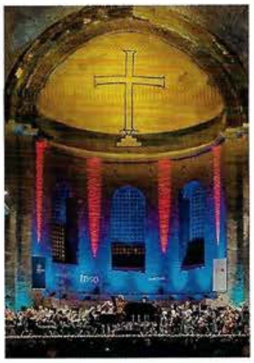
Visual impact was the aim of the powerful palace design studio, which dictated the look of all creations, from kaftans to tiles. Carefully stowed away for centuries, the sultans' gorgeous kaftans, with their long ceremonial sleeves, are currently out of sight, awaiting a new gallery.

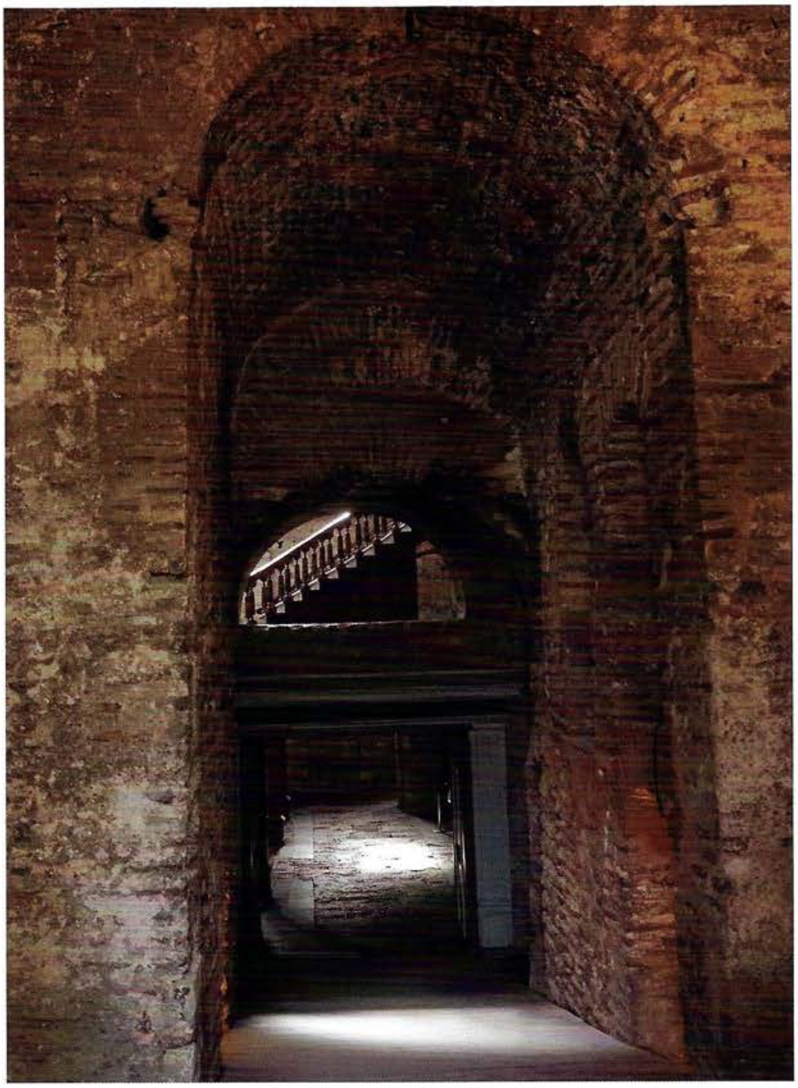
Left A 16th-century kaftan made from a single piece of *kemha* (brocaded silk) without repeats, possibly worn by a son of Süleyman the Magnificent
Below A kaftan with tiger-stripe and leopard-spot (*cintamani*) motifs that possibly belonged to Deli (Mad) Ibrahim II (1640–48)
Bottom The palace acquired the Spoonmaker's Diamond, a pear-shaped gem (at 86 carats, the world's fourth largest) found in the ruins left by a fire in the 1680s





ALI KONYALI





MONICA FRITZ

2 Ayairini

Haghia Irene (Ayairini), Justinian's 6th-century Church of Holy Peace, in the outer courtyard of Topkapı Palace (above and top), stands on the site of a temple and of the first Christian church in the city, built by Constantine in the 4th century. The basilica became an armoury museum in the 19th century – hence the display of weaponry in the Ottoman painting in the dome. You can now buy a ticket to wander its cavernous spaces, but the best way to experience it is to go to a concert (for tickets, biletix.com).

Ayairini Müzesi
Topkapı Palace (outer courtyard). Wed–Mon 9–4
Tram: Gülhane or Sultanahmet
+90 212 512 0480

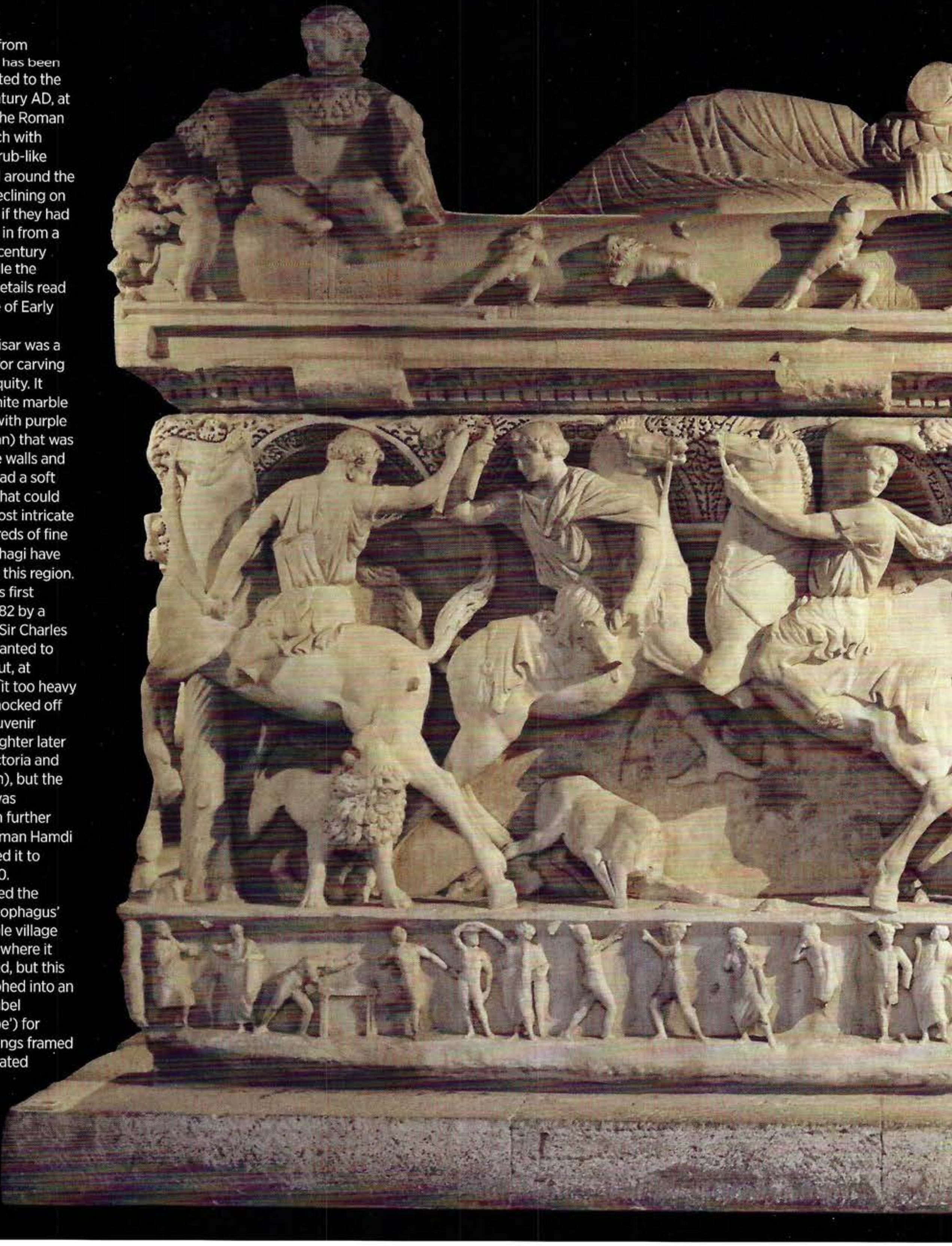
The Sidamara Sarcophagus

The 'Sidamara Sarcophagus' from central Turkey has been stylistically dated to the 2nd or 3rd century AD, at the height of the Roman Empire. It is rich with invention; cherub-like erotes gambol around the dead couple reclining on the summit as if they had been dropped in from a Baroque 17th-century altarpiece, while the architectural details read like a foretaste of Early Byzantium.

Afyonkarahisar was a prized centre for carving marble in antiquity. It produced a white marble shot through with purple veins (Docimian) that was filleted to pave walls and floors. It also had a soft white marble that could support the most intricate carving. Hundreds of fine Roman sarcophagi have been traced to this region.

This one was first identified in 1882 by a British consul, Sir Charles Wilson, who wanted to take it home but, at 32 tons, found it too heavy to move. He knocked off a head as a souvenir (which his daughter later gave to the Victoria and Albert Museum), but the sarcophagus was protected from further damage by Osman Hamdi Bey, who moved it to Istanbul in 1900.

It was labelled the 'Sidamara Sarcophagus' after the humble village outside Konya where it had been stored, but this has since morphed into an art-historical label ('Sidamara-type') for figurative carvings framed by richly decorated arcades.



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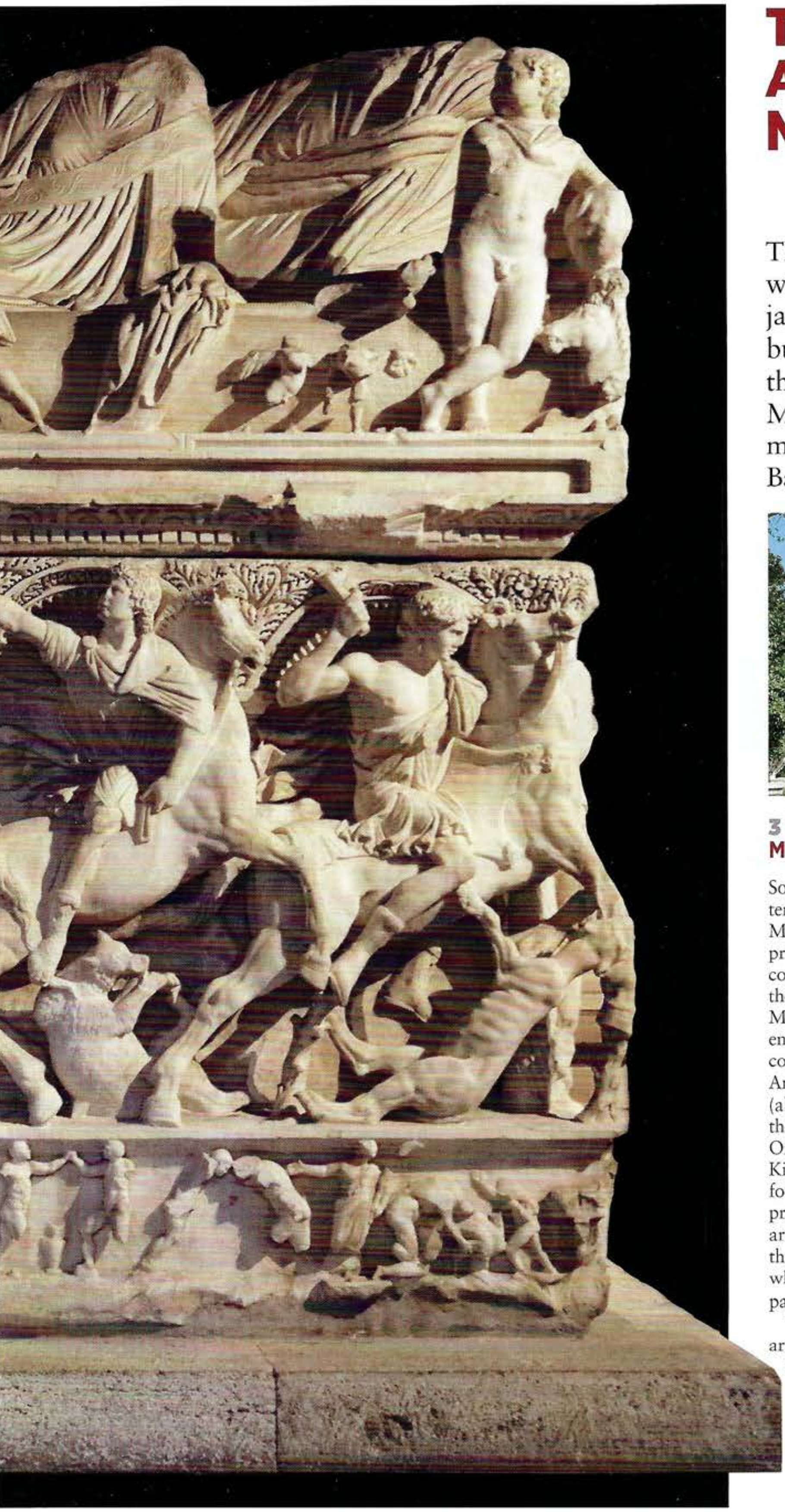


The Istanbul Archaeological Museums

Three fantastic museums surround what was once a playing field for the javelin game of *jereed*: the Çinili Kiosk, built by Mehmed the Conqueror in the 1470s, now a tile museum; the Museum of the Ancient East; and the main Archaeological Museum. Barnaby Rogerson takes us on a tour

3 The Archaeological Museum

Somewhat confusingly, the term Archaeological Museum refers to the principal museum in a complex of three known as the (Istanbul) Archaeological Museums (one ticket gains entrance to all three). The complex that includes the Archaeological Museum (above and following pages), the Museum of the Ancient Orient (p78) and the Tiled Kiosk (Çinili Köşk, p80) was founded in 1881 to teach and promote architecture and art, as well as to fit in with the Topkapı's topography, which is full of Ottoman pavilions of different periods.

The archaeologist and artist Osman Hamdi Bey founded the principal museum to display such spoils as the sarcophagi of Alexander the Great and King Tibnit, recovered at the royal necropolis of Sidon. Opened in 1891, it was to be the equal of any museum in the Western world. Osman Hamdi Bey pushed through laws to protect Ottoman antiquities, and established a system of licences to allow foreign archaeological expeditions to work within the Empire.

The architect was the Istanbul-born Alexandre Vallaury. The portico bears the *tuğra* (cipher) of Abdülhamid II and the original name, Asar-ı Atika Müzesi (Museum of Ancient Works).

The Archaeological Museum has just reopened its first rooms after ten years of restoration. The rest are likely to be equally superb.

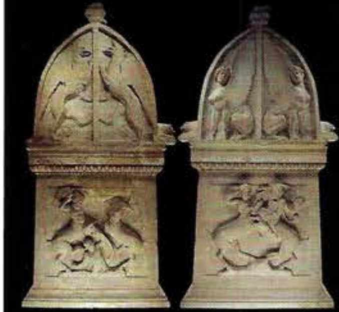
İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri
Gülhane Parkı
All three museums: summer 9–7, winter 9–5, closed Mon
Tram: Gülhane
+90 212 520 7740
muze.gov.tr

Stone coffin of a warrior king

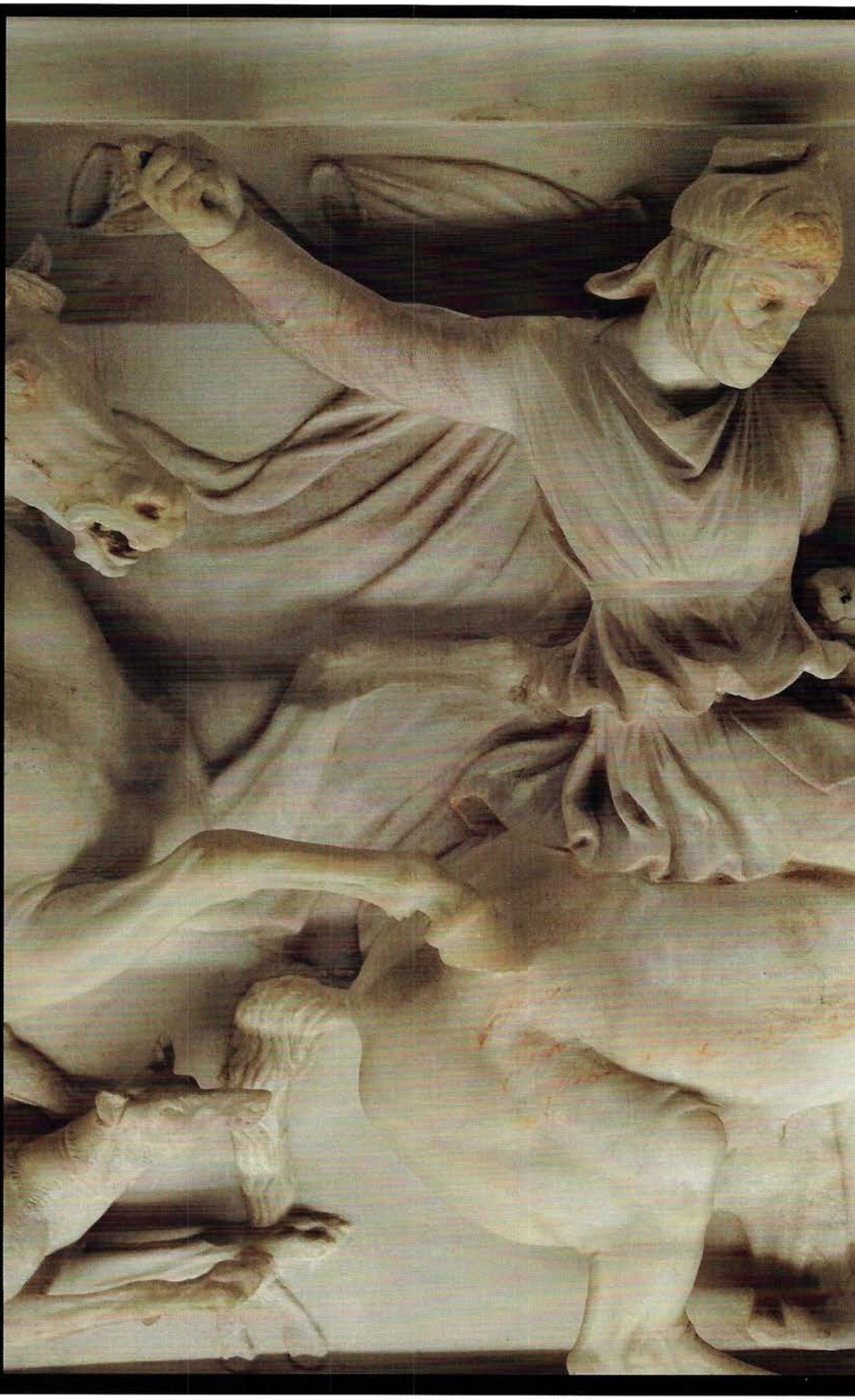
Above and right: The Alexander Sarcophagus
The single greatest treasure of the Archaeological Museum, the so-called Alexander Sarcophagus has survived the millennia in near-pristine condition, so that even patches of original colour can be recognised and holes identified where gilded bronze armaments slotted into the frieze of figures.

Unearthed by Osman Hamdi Bey in the royal necropolis of Sidon in 1884, it is believed to have been carved for King Abdalonymos of Sidon, who had lived as a humble but honest gardener before being restored to the throne of his ancestors by Alexander the Great.

It offers us a miraculous insight into the vitality and achievement of the Hellenistic Levant, as war between Macedonian Greek warriors (led by an identifiable Alexander) and veiled Persians evolves into the shared pleasures of the hunt.



Above: The Lycian Sarcophagus
Pairs of griffins and sphinxes are carved into the ends of the lid of the fabulously ornate 5th-century-BC Lycian Sarcophagus, so called for stylistic reasons. Although excavated from the Sidon necropolis, the marble coffin was almost certainly carved by Lycian Greek artists working in this Phoenician province of the Persian Empire



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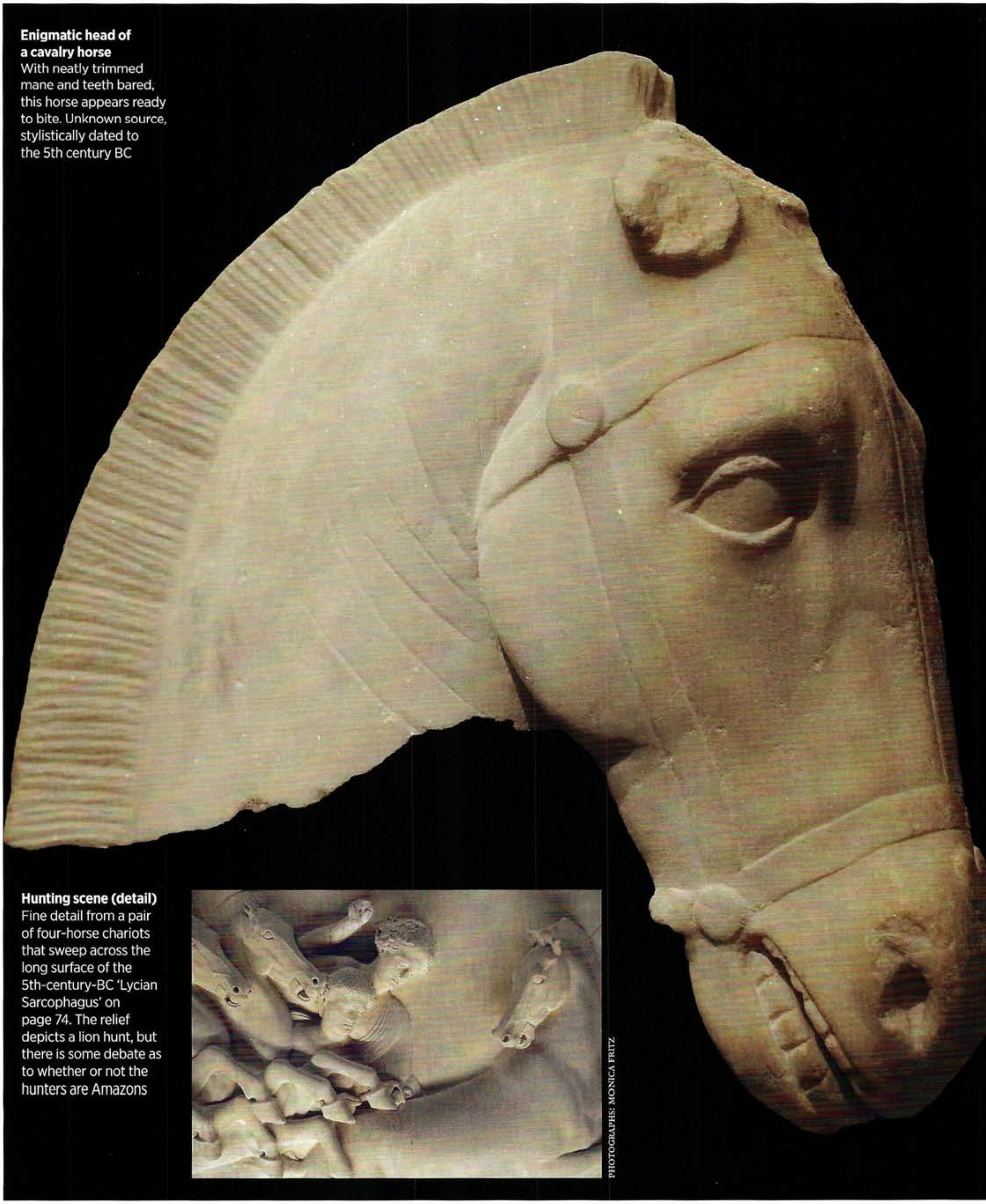
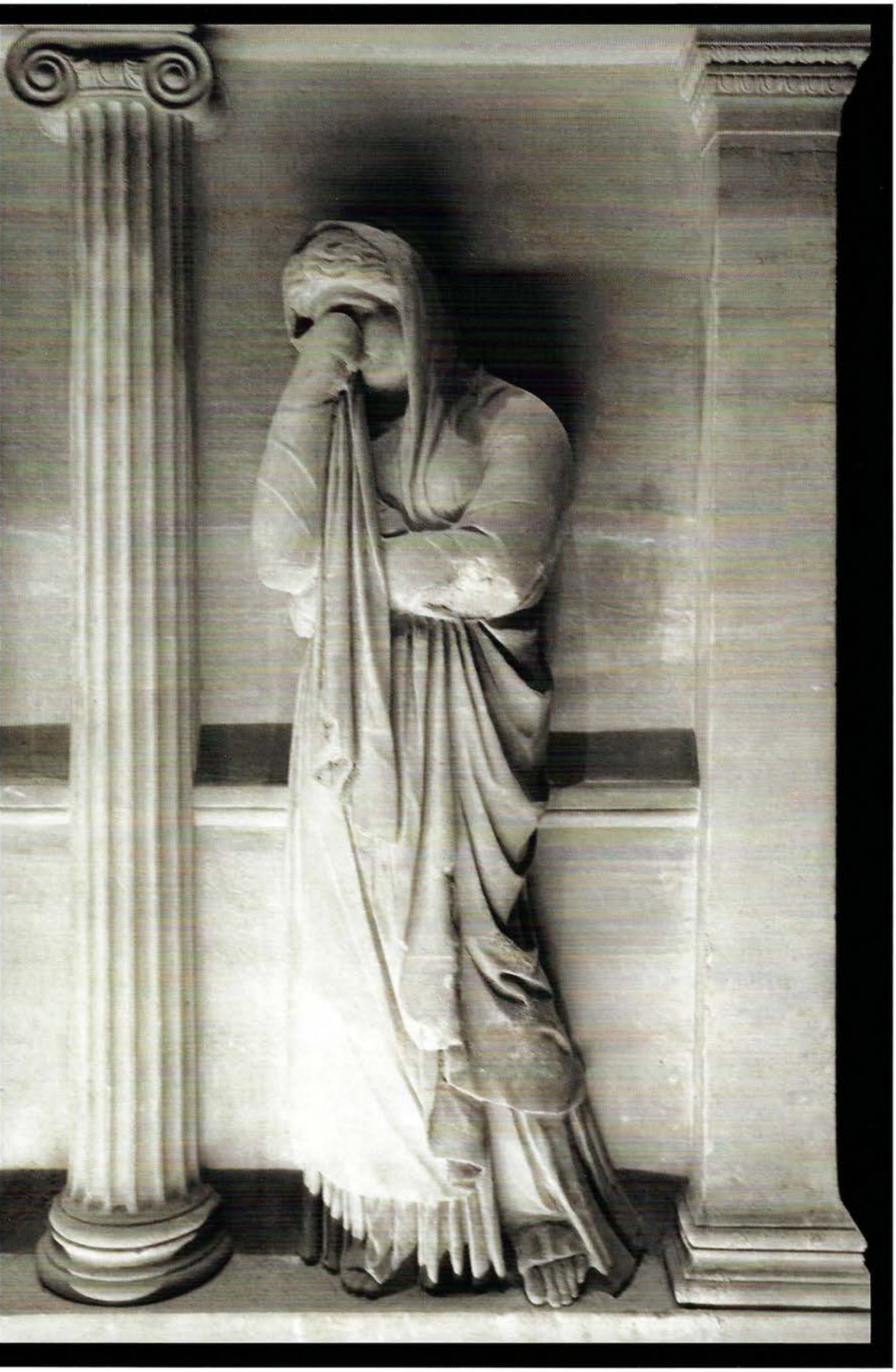


Enigmatic head of a cavalry horse
With neatly trimmed mane and teeth bared, this horse appears ready to bite. Unknown source, stylistically dated to the 5th century BC

Hunting scene (detail)
Fine detail from a pair of four-horse chariots that sweep across the long surface of the 5th-century-BC 'Lycian Sarcophagus' on page 74. The relief depicts a lion hunt, but there is some debate as to whether or not the hunters are Amazons

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

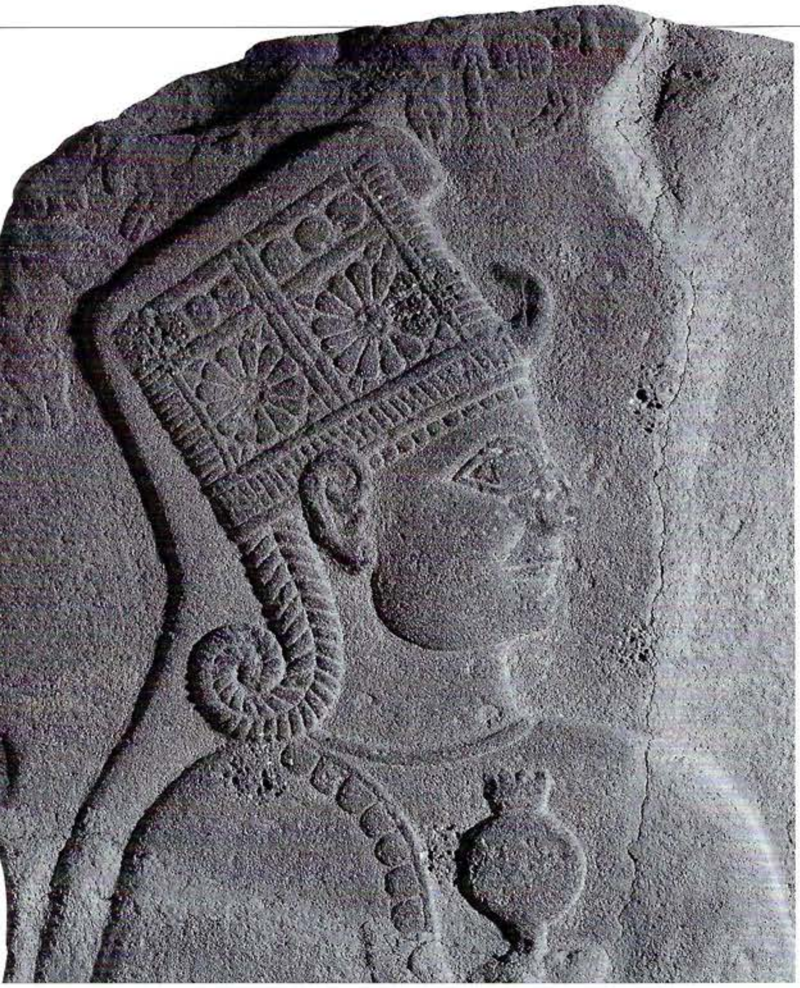
The Mourner
Eighteen grieving women in classical Greek dress embellish the 4th-century-BC Sarcophagus of the Mourning Women. They are individually portrayed under an Ionic colonnade, but this woman is the most distraught. The sarcophagus may have held the remains of King Straton of Sidon, who died in 358BC after struggling to reassert Phoenician independence in the decaying years of the Persian Empire

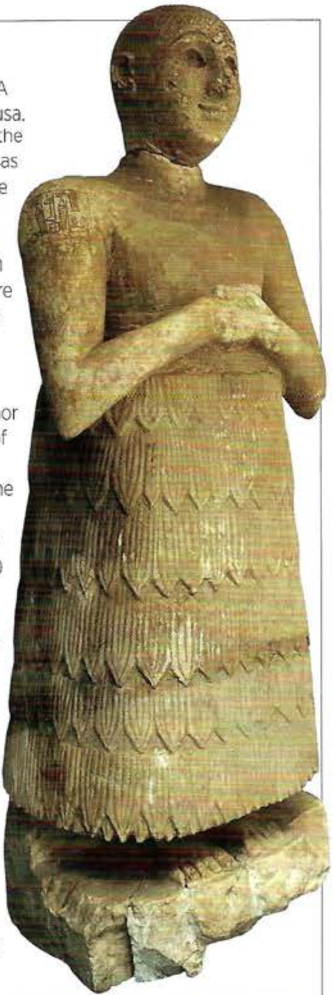


4 The Museum of the Ancient Orient

Commissioned by Osman Hamdi Bey and built in 1883 to a design by Alexandre Vallaury, this neo-Renaissance building was originally home to Istanbul's Academy of Fine Arts, with students and their tutors having instant access to the surrounding galleries. However, as excavations continued to turn up treasures, the artists moved out in the early 1900s, the artefacts moved in, and this became the Museum of the Ancient Orient.

Here are some of the museums' most ancient possessions, such as a tiled relief of lions and kings from the gates of Nineveh; another relief depicting the Anatolian mother goddess Kubaba; glazed bricks with more lions from Babylon's Processional Way and Ishtar Gate; and the Kadesh Treaty between Ramesses II and the Hittite Hattusili III in 1269BC, a cuneiform tablet that is the oldest peace treaty ever found.





Garden of wonders

Opposite top and bottom A Corinthian capital and Medusa, probably a pillar base from the same building as the Medusas in the Yerebatan Cistern. The galleries can never keep pace with the excavations, so the garden is strewn with architectural fragments. Here you can rest your eyes, take tea and talk to the cats

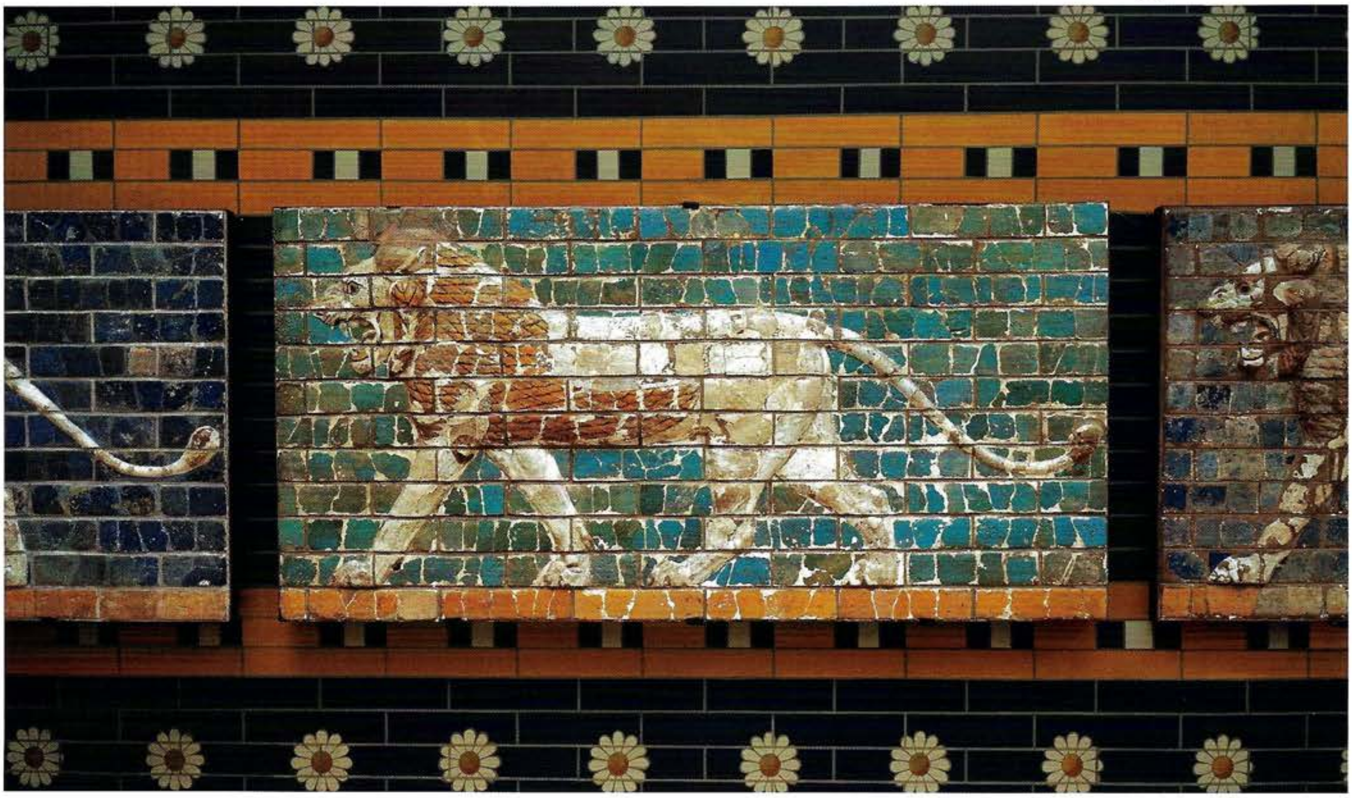
The Ancient Orient

Centre Puzur-Ishtar, governor of the Old Babylonian city of Mari (1894–1594 BC)

Left Hittite basalt relief of the Anatolian mother goddess Kubaba – Kybele and Meter Theou (Mother of the Gods) to the Greeks, and Magna Mater to the Romans

Right A king from Sumer in southern Mesopotamia (mid-3rd millennium BC). An inscription dedicates this statue of Lugal-dalu, king of Adab (modern Bismaya in Iraq): 'To the great god Esar'

Right Prowling lions from Babylon's Processional Way. This glazed-brick frieze dates from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II in the 7th century BC



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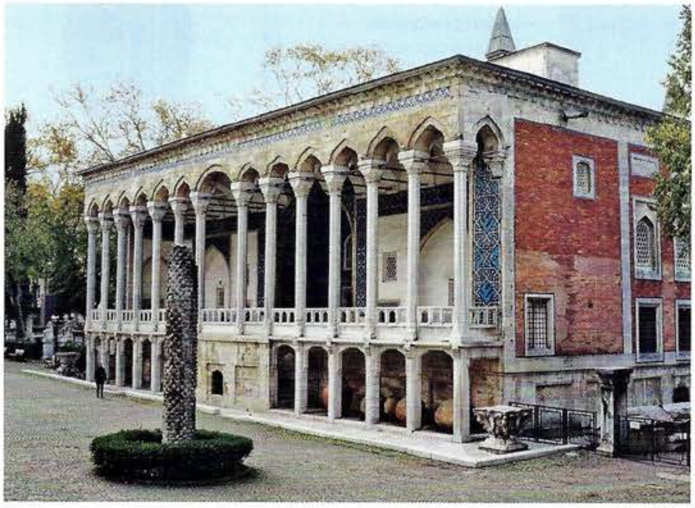
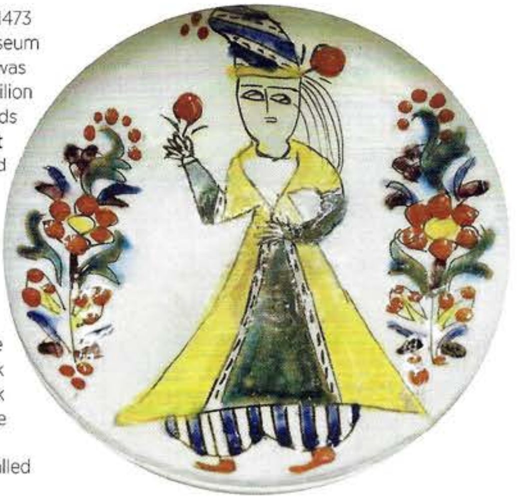


MONICA FRITZ

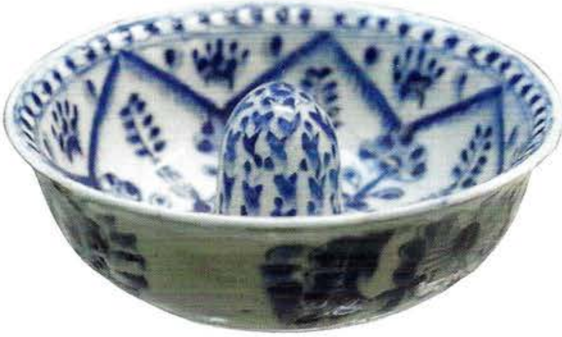
Left and bottom The 1473 Çinili Kiosk, now a museum housing historic tiles, was built as a pleasure pavilion in the Topkapı's grounds **Right and below right** The colourful plate and blue-and-white lemon squeezer were both made in the 18th century by the potters of Kütahya, who continued to thrive after the demise of the potteries in Iznik **Opposite** The peacock fountain known as 'The Fountain of Youth' (Ab-ı Hayat) was installed by Murad III in 1593

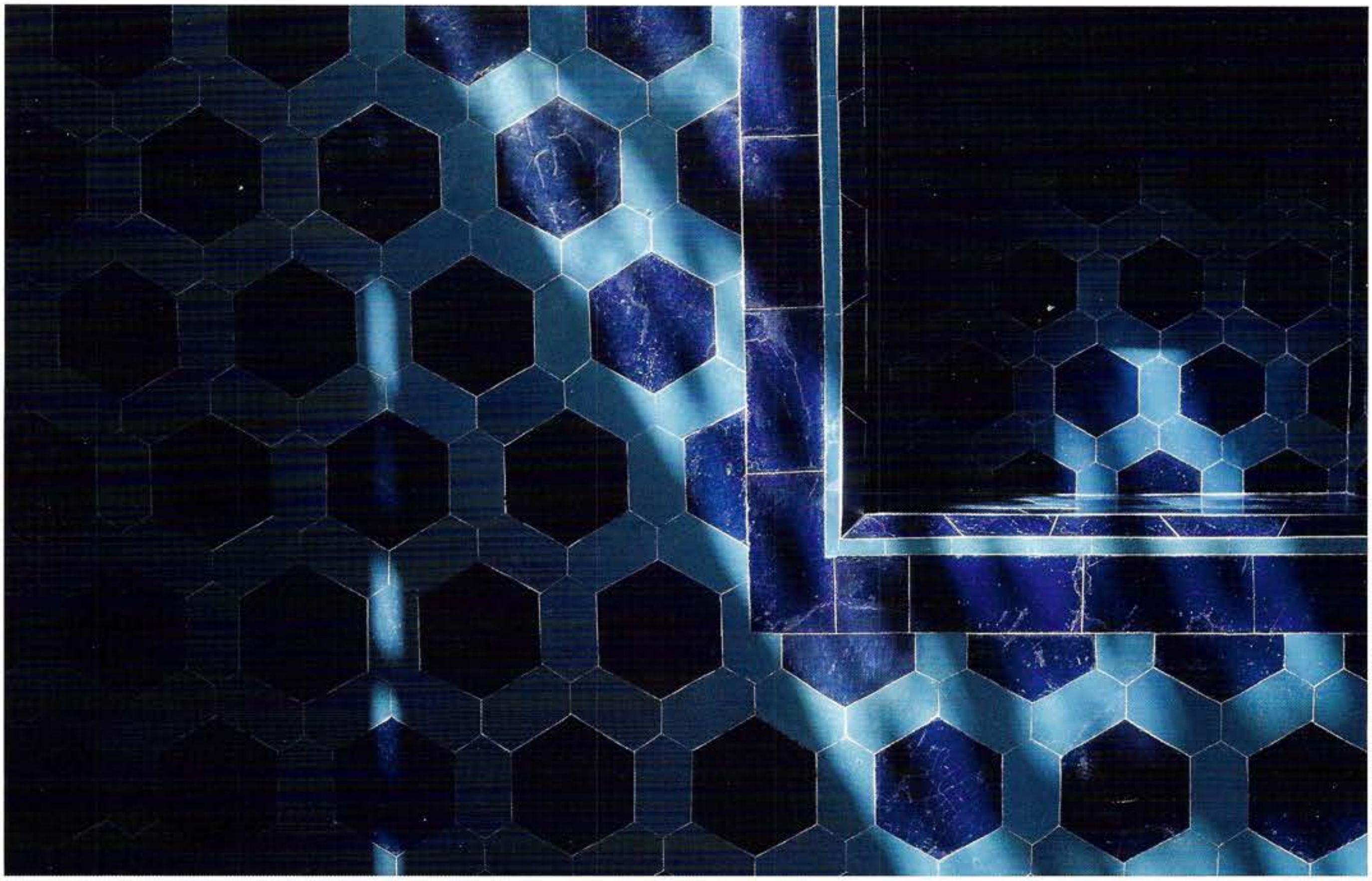


5 The Tiled Kiosk

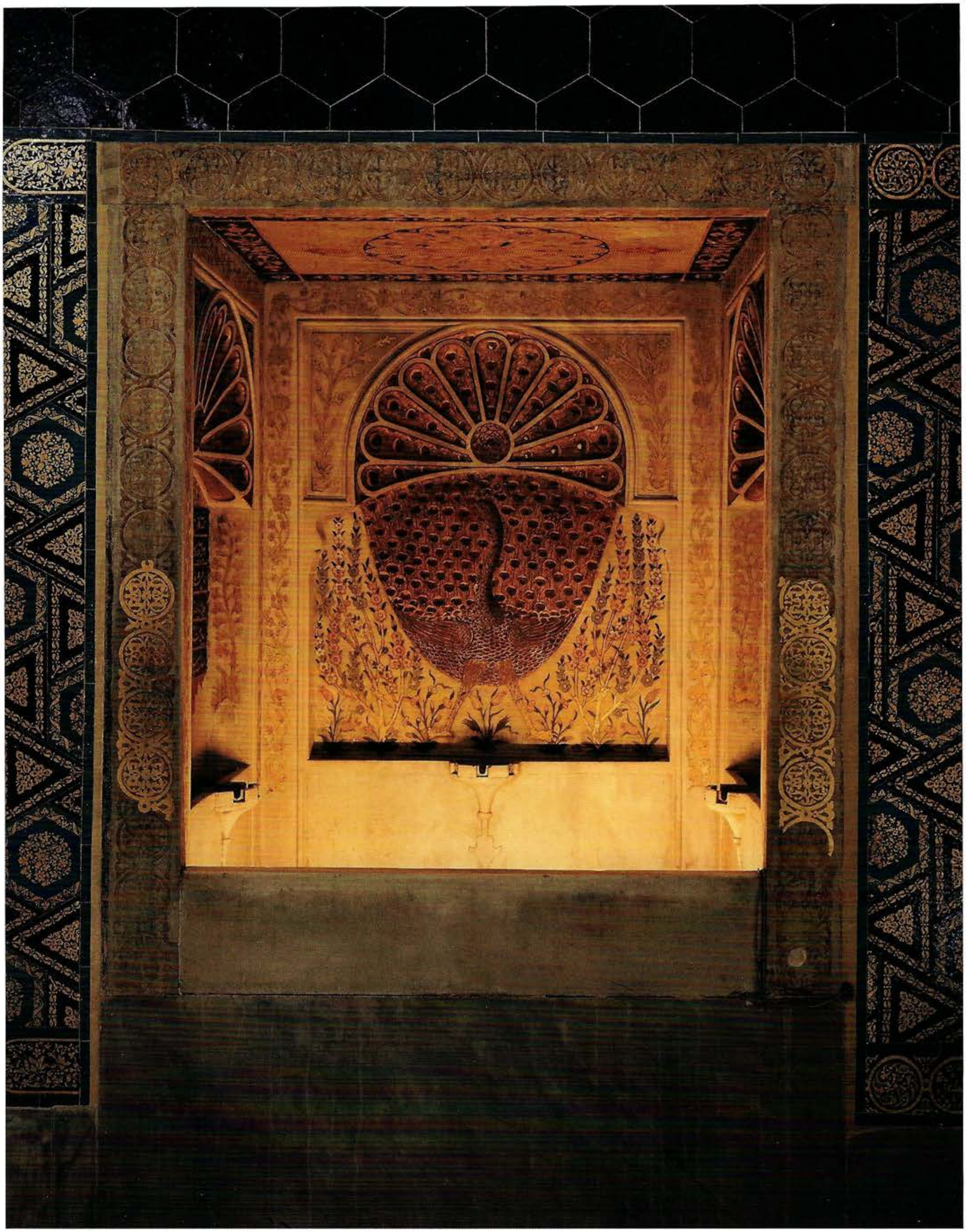
Directly facing the main Archaeological Museum is the elegant Çinili Köşk (Tiled Kiosk), built by Mehmed the Conqueror with a balcony for watching equestrian tournaments. Though now deprived of its lawns and horsemen, it smacks instantly of the Turkic homeland of Central Asia, having been built as a deliberate anachronism by Türkmen from the newly conquered city of Karaman in central Anatolia. The original wooden columns were restored in stone in the 18th century.

In the late 19th century the pavilion became a museum to display pottery, which is set against the splendid vaulted interior. More intimate rooms are tiled in contrasting blue hexagons (below). "The Fountain of Youth" (opposite), framed by blue-green tiles sketched over in gilt, became the subject of a famous 1904 painting by Osman Hamdi Bey.





PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ / FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



In and around Ayasofya

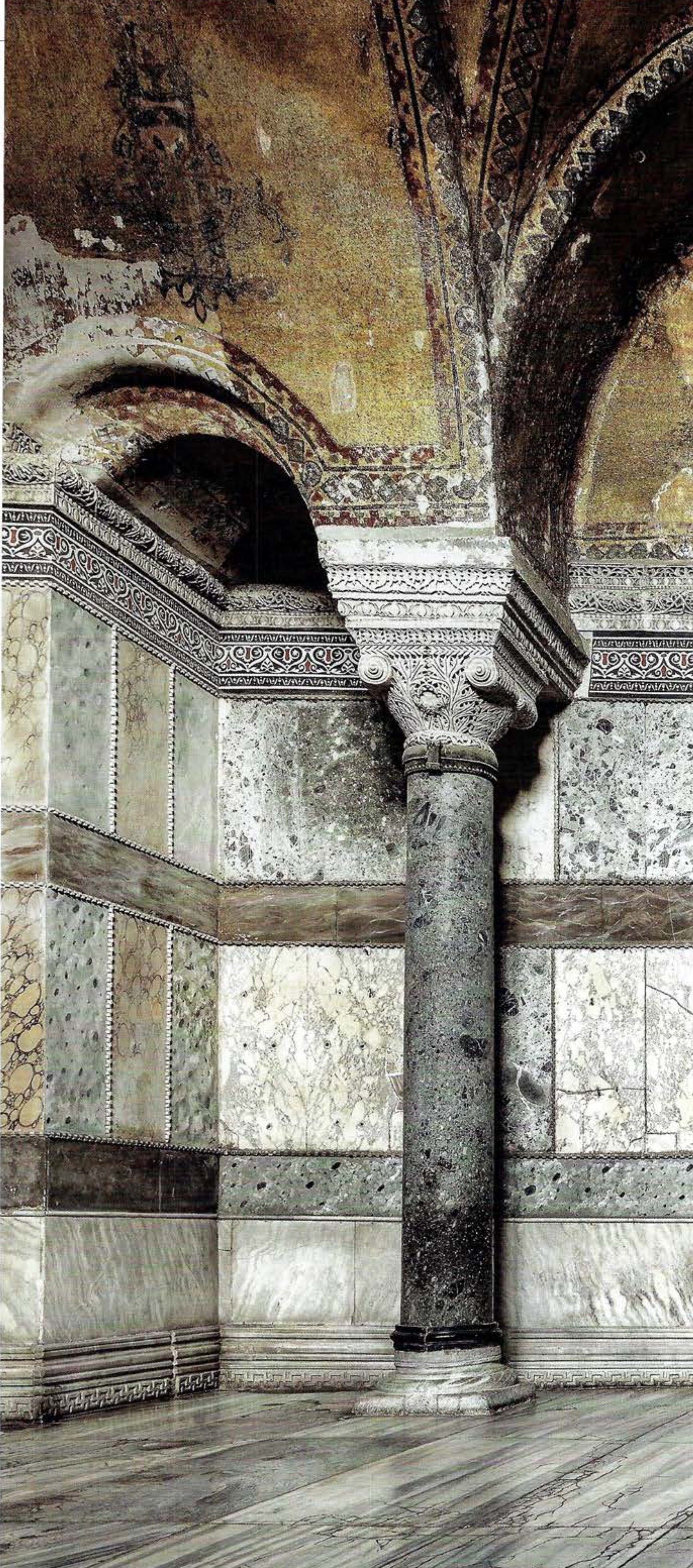
Towering over the Topkapı gates is one of the world's most important monuments, the sixth-century basilica of Ayasofya, a museum since 1934. After roaming through cavernous halls, upstairs and down, walk outside to the domed mausoleum of Selim II for a feast of 16th-century Iznik tiles, and an intriguing carpet museum, recently opened in Ayasofya's soup kitchens. For dessert, step across the road to the palatial Yerebatan Cistern

6 Ayasofya

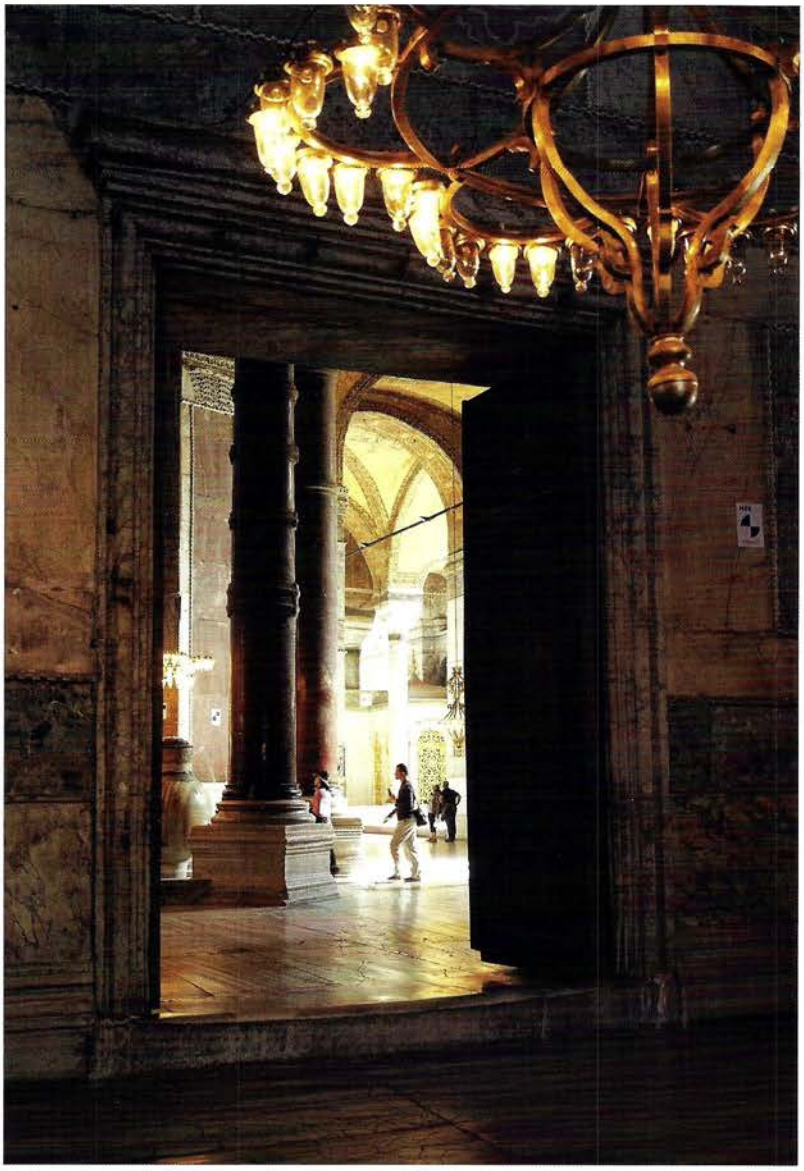
Originally known as the Church of the Holy Wisdom (or Megale Ekklesia, Great Church), Ayasofya was the greatest and most daring achievement of Byzantine architecture. Rebuilt in 532–37 under Justinian I, it is today the most famous monument in Istanbul, as well as one of the largest vaulted structures to survive from antiquity. As a cathedral and patriarchal seat, it was the centre of Eastern Christendom, also acting as a backdrop for imperial court ceremonial. Throughout the Byzantine era, it served the Orthodox rite. During the Latin Occupation (1204–61) it became the Roman Catholic cathedral; but after the conquest of the city by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the first official act of Mehmed the Conqueror was to convert the church to a mosque. And so it remained until 1934, when, following the foundation of the Turkish Republic, it was converted into a museum.

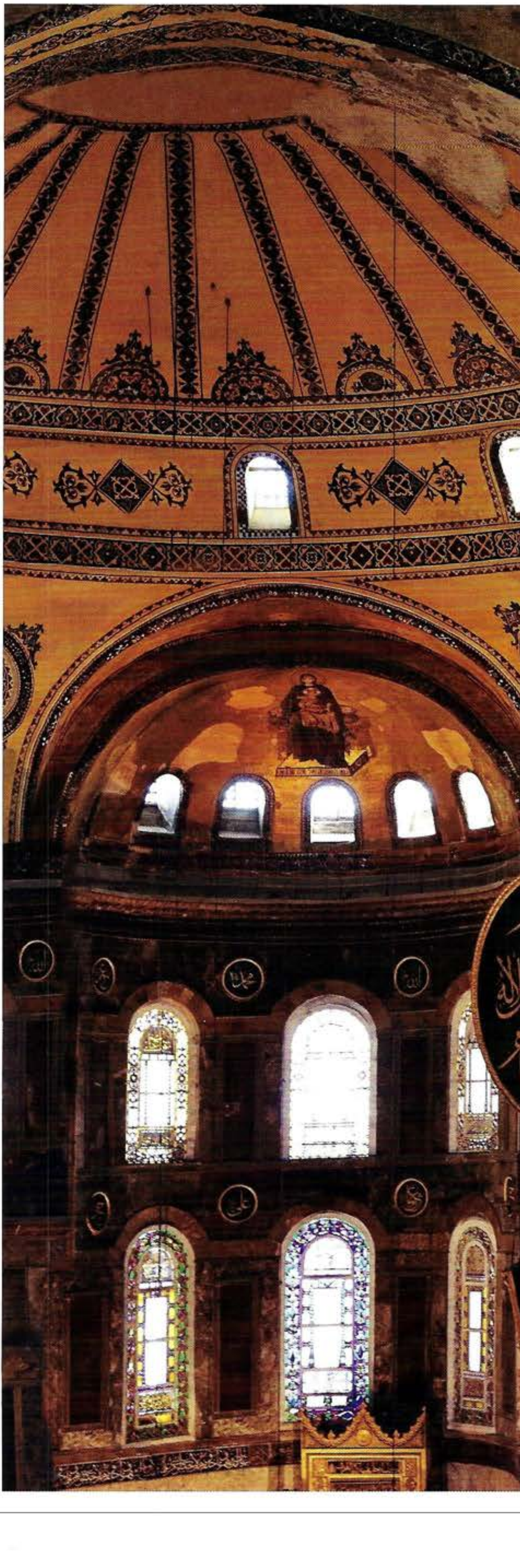
Its vast interior space still impresses even the most jaded of visitors, but the details also repay close

MONICA FRITZ


MASSIMO LISTRI

Above Ayasofya rises above the domed tombs of the Ottoman sultans (p86). In the foreground are the remains of the Byzantine Great Palace **Right** Massimo Listri captures the astonishing watery effect of the marble floors and walls



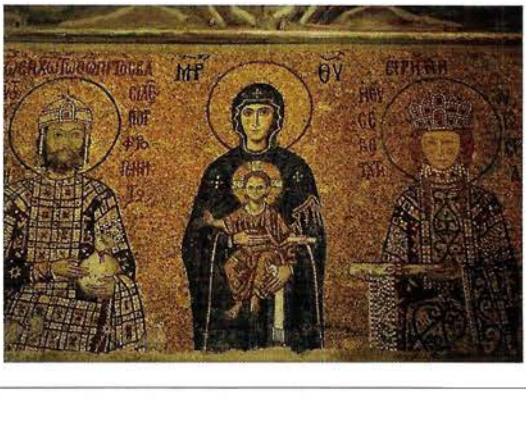


attention, most notably the imperial mosaics in the gallery: in the south aisle, Constantine IX and Zoe presenting offerings to Christ (11th century); John II and Eirene presenting offerings to the Virgin (12th century); and the magnificent Deesis mosaic, with Christ flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist (late 13th century). Often overlooked in the north aisle is the short-lived Emperor Alexander (10th century).

There are also magnificent displays of multicoloured marbles, lace-like capitals and a marble floor that resembles rippling water.

Ayasofya Müzesi
Sultanahmet
Summer 9–6, winter 9–4
Closed Mon in winter
Tram: Sultanahmet
+90 212 522 1750
muze.gov.tr

Above A view into Ayasofya's cavernous domed hall
Right The apse with its 9th-century Virgin and Child
Below Constantine IX and the Empress Zoe present their offerings, 11th century



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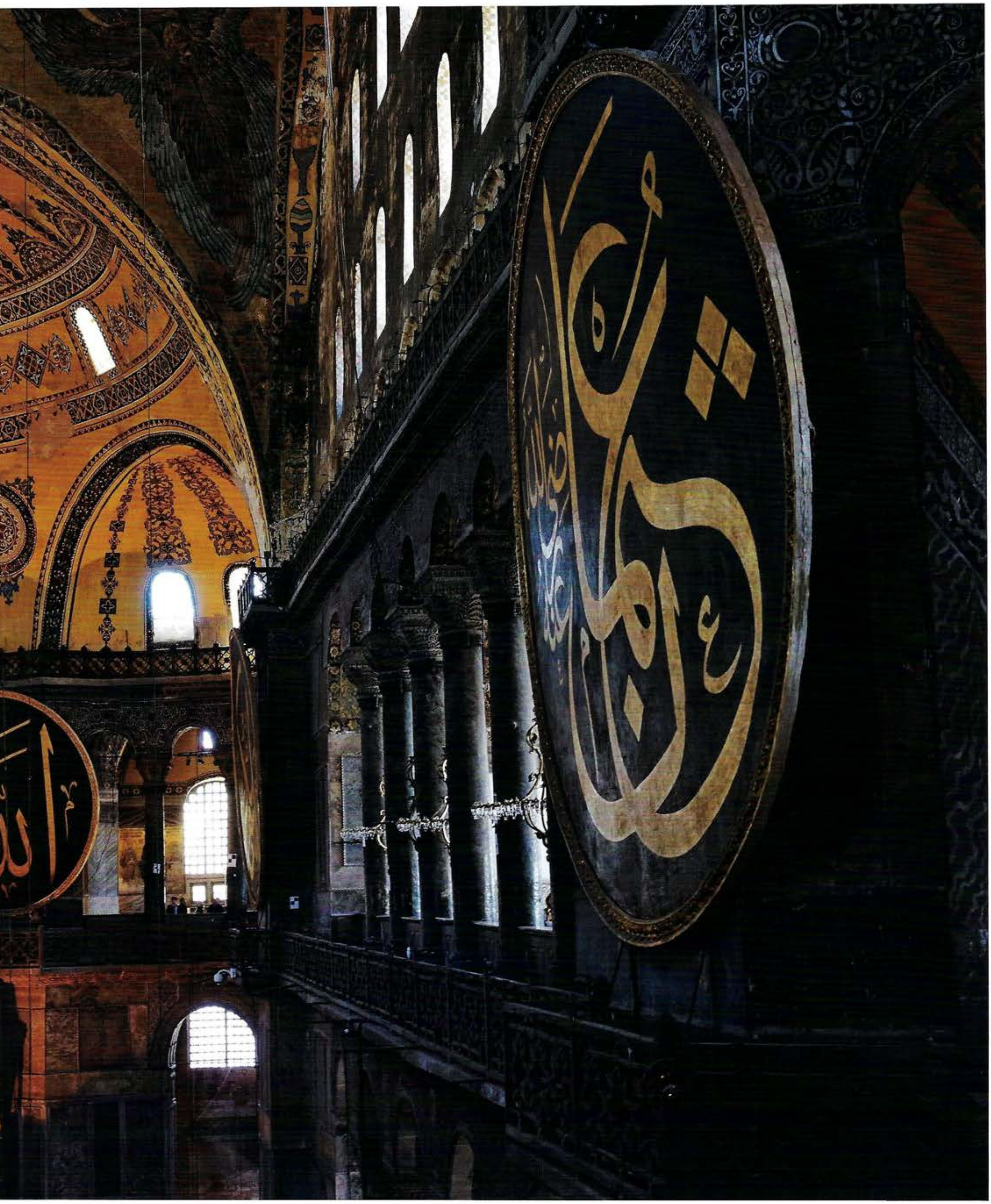
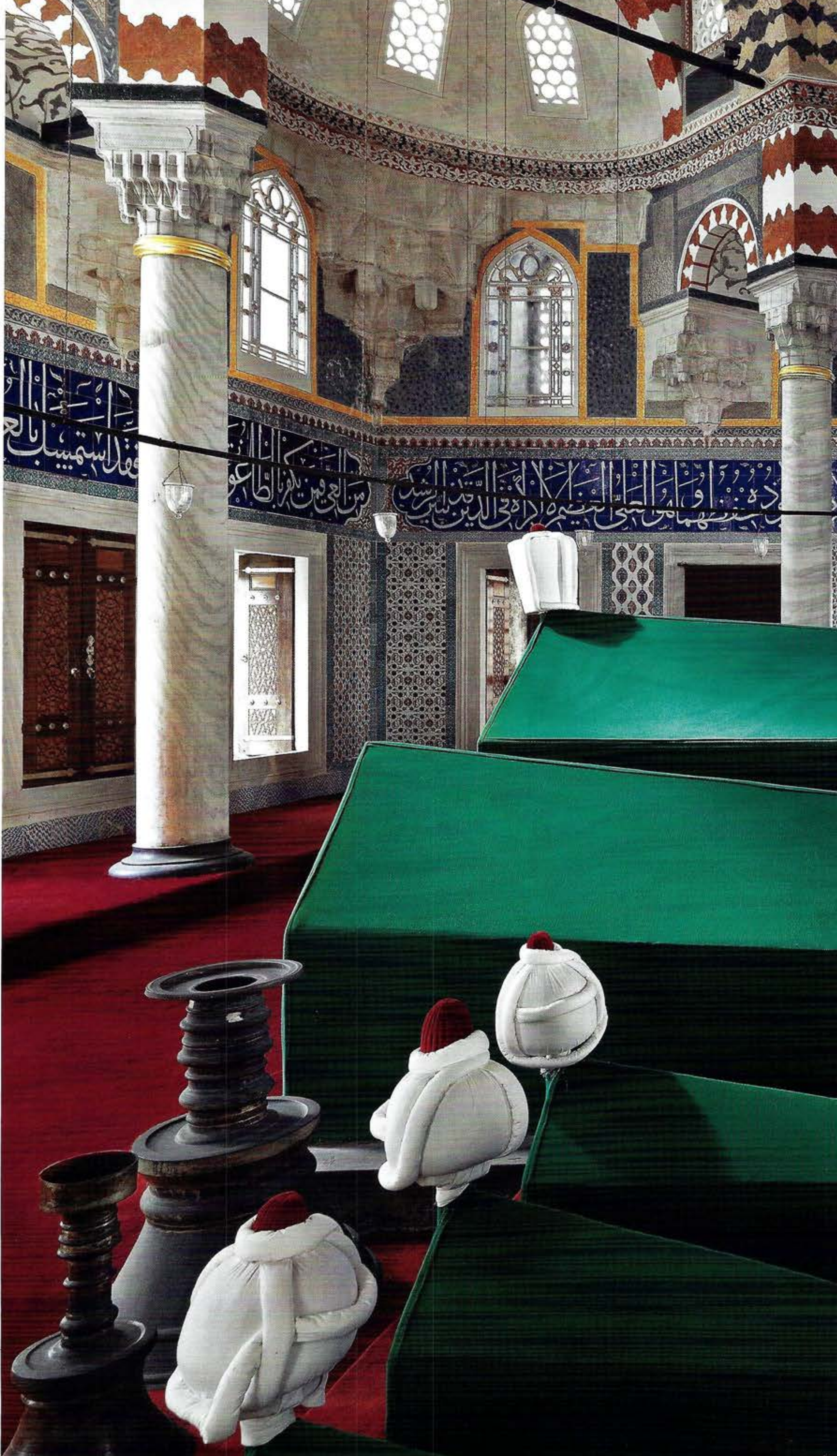


7 The Mausoleum of Selim II

No tour of Ayasofya is complete without a visit to the beautiful domed mausoleum of Selim II in its precincts. Reached from the street at the back of the basilica, it has the merits of being free to enter and free of crowds. Two other sultans have domed tombs in this garden – Selim's successors Murad III and Mehmed III – but this is the most elegant, designed by the great Sinan, who used classical columns and the finest Iznik tiles to great effect. It was completed in 1577, three years after the Sultan died.

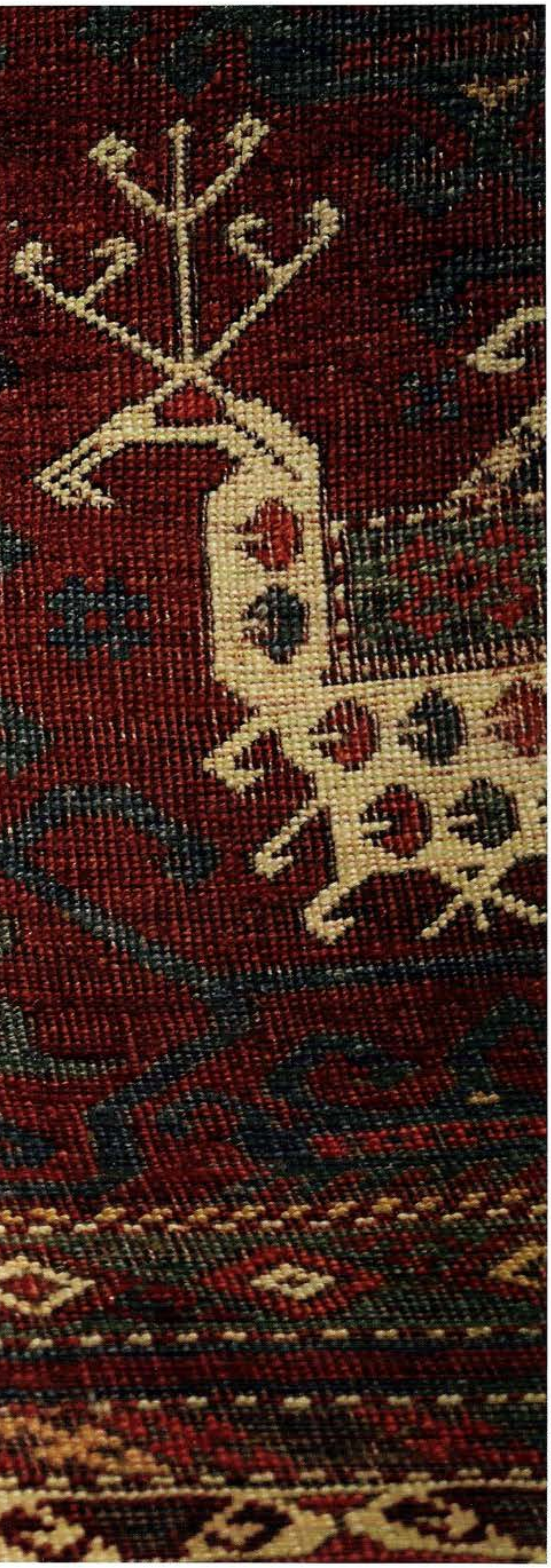
Selim II commissioned the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, Sinan's crowning glory, but chose to be buried at Ayasofya, the Ottoman Empire's primary mosque for five centuries.

The tiles that line the walls are among the best Iznik ever produced. All are 16th-century, except for the panel to the left of the entrance, which is a copy. The original was removed to France for restoration in 1927 but was never returned, and is on show in the Louvre.
Tues–Sun 9–4
Tram: Sultanahmet
+90 212 522 1750
muze.gov.tr



Selim II's mausoleum in the precincts of Ayasofya. The tombs of the Sultan, his wife Nurbanu, children and grandchildren are covered in green felt and adorned with turbans

MASSIMO LISTRI



8 The Carpet Museum

One of the Old City's great secrets is the Carpet Museum in the *imaret* (soup kitchens) of Ayasofya, reached through an imposing domed gate (right and below) opposite the Ahmed III Fountain. Its three rooms show a more dynamic, less conservative view of the nation's textile heritage than the nearby Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (p92). The first room has the classic carpets loved by carpet enthusiasts. The second moves from the court to Anatolia, mixing regional designs with traditional medallion ones. The colour and power astonish, and the compositions reverberate with historical significance. Large mosque carpets fill the final room; often exported to Europe in the 18th century, they are now rare survivors.

Halı Müzesi
Babı Humayun Cad 2/1,
Sultanahmet
Summer 9–5, winter 9–4,
closed Mon
+90 212 512 6993

Left A central Anatolian carpet in the Carpet Museum (once the Vakıflar Carpet Museum) shows a tree of life and a pair of winged creatures. In the words of *Halı*, the textile arts bible, it 'sets connoisseurs' hearts aflutter'. Some date it to the 15th century, others to the 17th. Carbon-dating gives a date range of 1490–1670
Above and below The splendid Baroque gate to Ayasofya's soup kitchens, established by Sultan Mahmud I in the 1740s

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

9 Yerebatan Sarayı

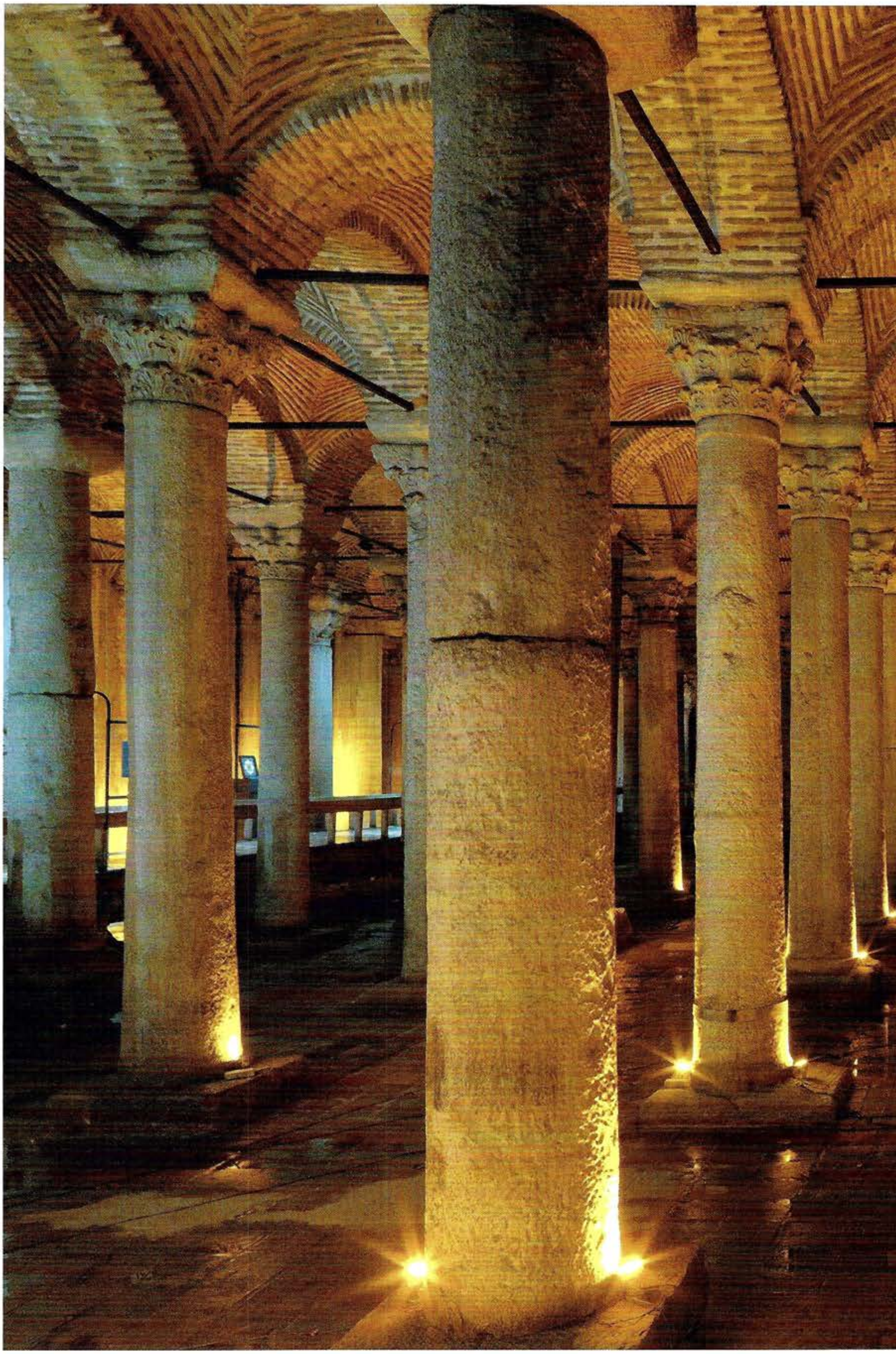
Everyone loves the 6th-century Yerebatan Sarayı, also known as the Basilica Cistern, with its ranks of marble columns rising out of the water, its iconic moment in *From Russia with Love*, its coloured lights, New Age music, slippery floors, and that constant drip, drip, drip.

Historically, nothing significant ever happened here, and it was never meant to be seen. Never mind: 52 stone stairs down, it's just the place to go on a sweltering day, and the payoff at the far end – two fearsome carved stone Medusa heads, recycled from who knows where? – is a spill with a thrill.

Many more cisterns lie concealed beneath the Old City. They gradually fell out of use after the Ottoman conquest in 1453, although they continued to supply water for the gardens of the Topkapı. A more confident capital relied for its drinking water on reservoirs built beyond the city walls in forests by the Black Sea.

At the traffic lights outside the entrance, note the Milion, a modest stump of a column, the centre of the Byzantine world from which all distances were measured.

Yerebatan Sarnıcı
Yerebatan Cad 1/3, Sultanahmet
Summer 9–6.30, winter 9–5.30
Tram: Sultanahmet
+90 212 512 1570
yerebatan.com/en

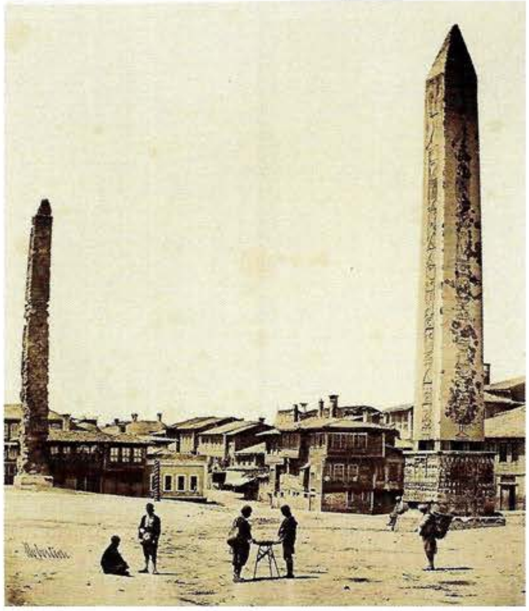


Water feature
The photographer Massimo Listri captures the astounding architecture of the most famous of Istanbul's Byzantine cisterns, 140 metres in length. Its brick arches are supported by 336 columns, carved from various types of marble and mostly brought in from recycled older structures

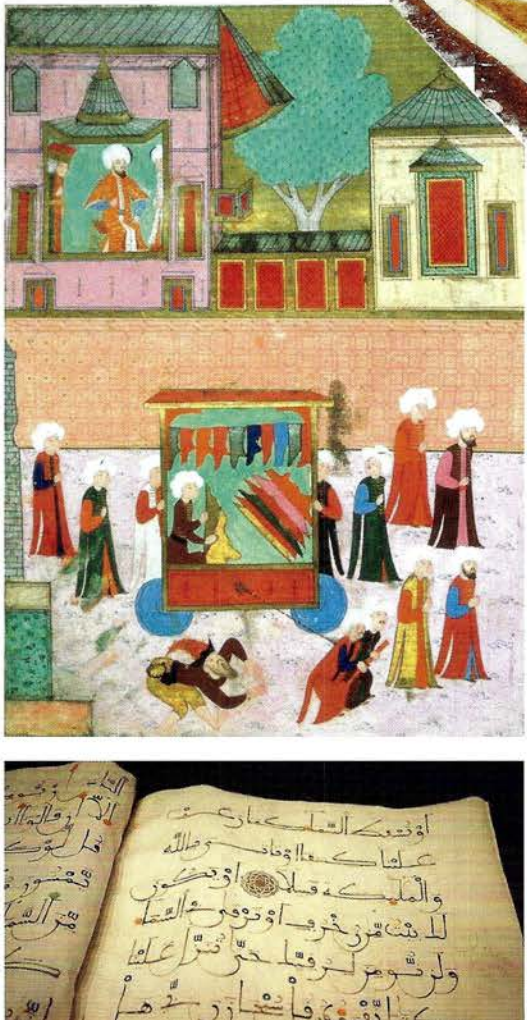
MASSIMO LISTRI

The Hippodrome and beyond

After the dank cistern, as most visitors head to the Grand Bazaar, connoisseurs will stay in the Hippodrome. Gone are its four splendid horses, now in Venice, but the ancient obelisk remains. Just yards away are the picture-perfect Blue Mosque and magnificent Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts. Less easy to find is the tiny museum housing the mosaics of the Byzantine Great Palace. Other museums are within easy reach



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



Far left James Robertson's 1857 photo of the Hippodrome
Top Seljuk rug, c1300, from the Alâeddin Mosque in Konya
Left The sultan looks on from the palace in its heyday as guilds process before him

Atmeydanı

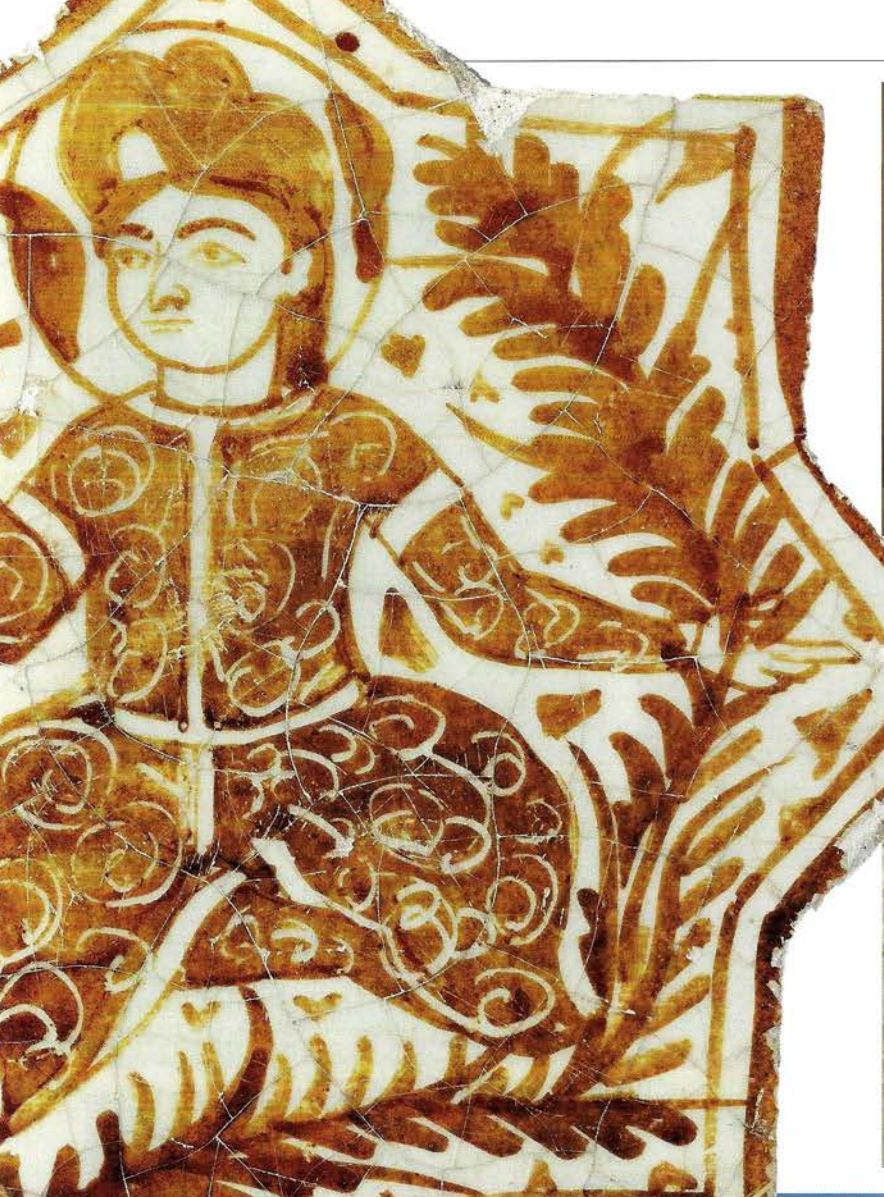
10 Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts

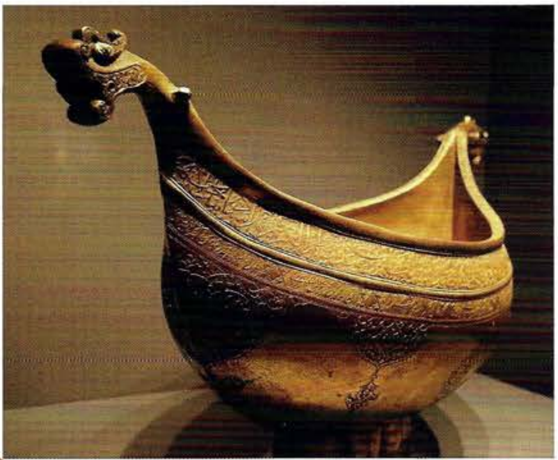
Across the Hippodrome from the Blue Mosque (Sultanahmet Camii), the residence of Süleyman the Magnificent's grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha is now an important museum. It is still often known as the İbrahim Paşa Sarayı, and it may have been its palatial pretension that provoked Süleyman to order Ibrahim's execution in 1536. It has since been a dormitory for Topkapı functionaries, a barracks and the country's first Western-style prison.

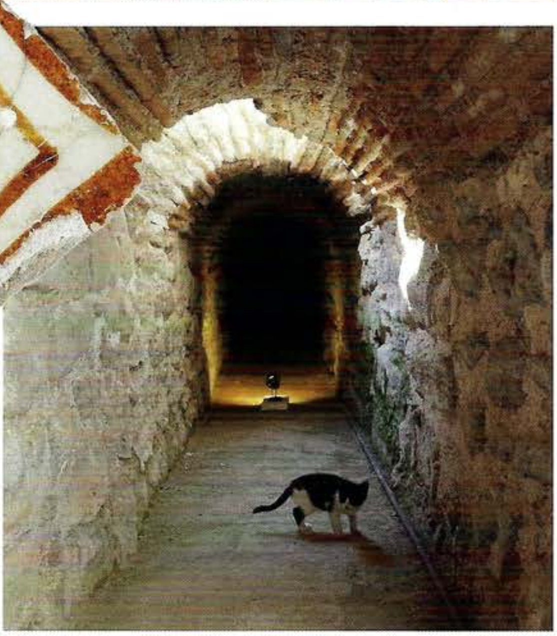
The vizier's audience room acts as a display area for wonderful Seljuk and Ottoman mosque carpets, some vast, some dating back to the 13th century. Many exhibits found their way here when they were sent to the capital for safekeeping as the Empire contracted.

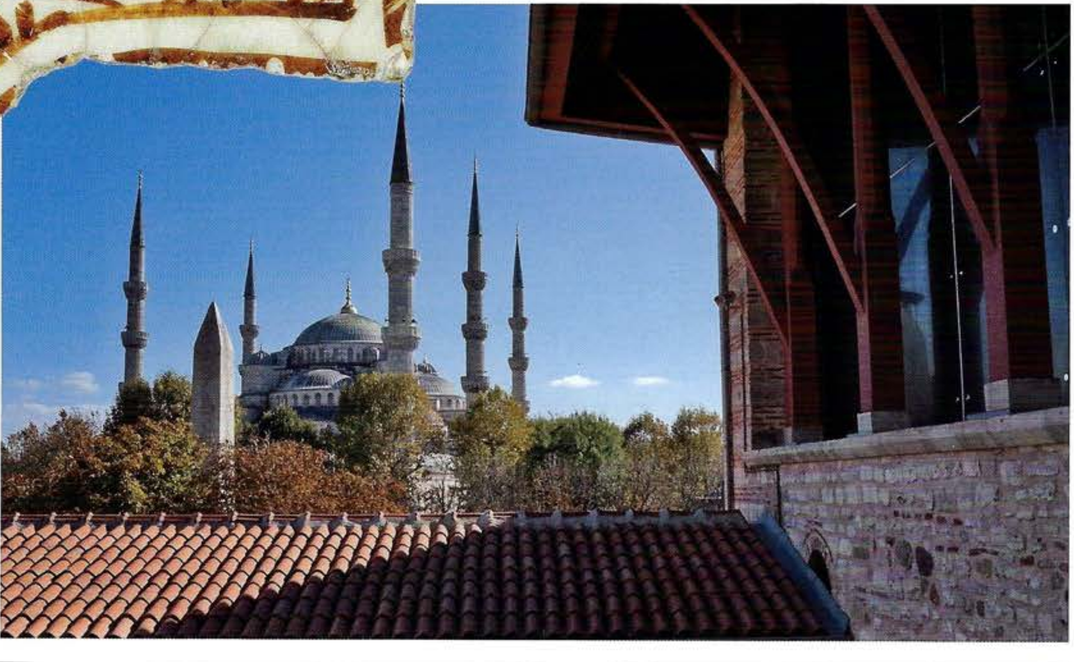
Türk-İslam Eserleri Müzesi
Atmeydanı, Sultanahmet
Winter 9–7, summer 9–5, closed Mon
+90 212 518 1805
muze.gov.tr

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ









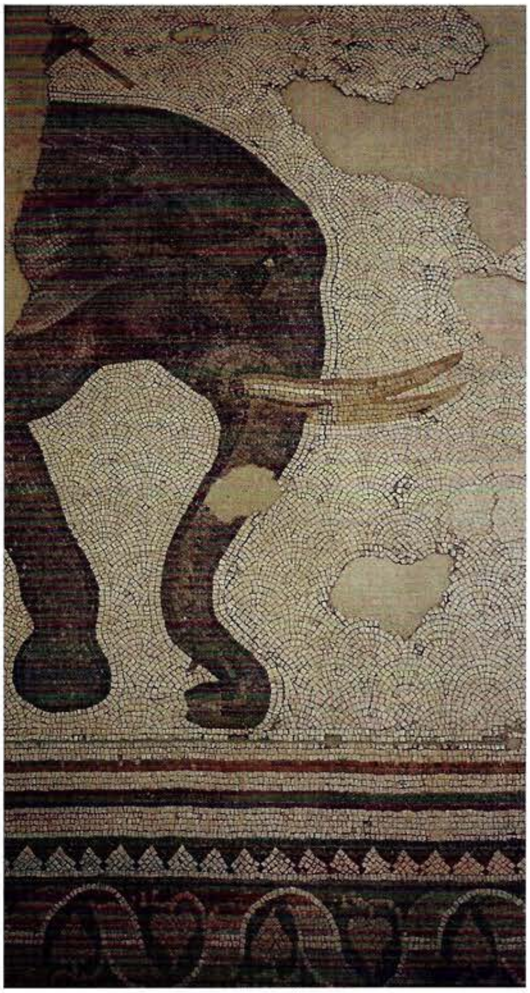
Bottom, far left Early Umayyad Period Koran (661–1031)
Left Seljuk lion, c1300, from the Karatay Medrese in Konya
Above Star tile, c1236, from the Seljuk summer palace of Kubâdâbâd on Lake Beyşehir
Right, from top 17th-century Safavid *keshkul* (begging bowl); a vault in the ancient Hippodrome found beneath the palace; the best view of the Blue Mosque is from the palace

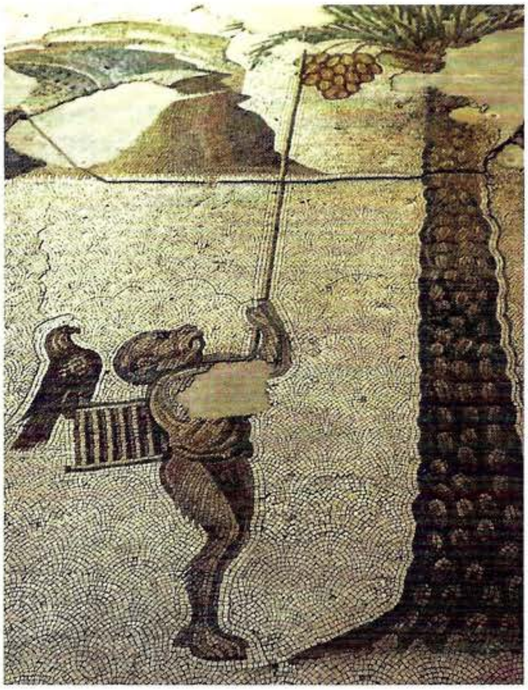
Arasta Bazaar

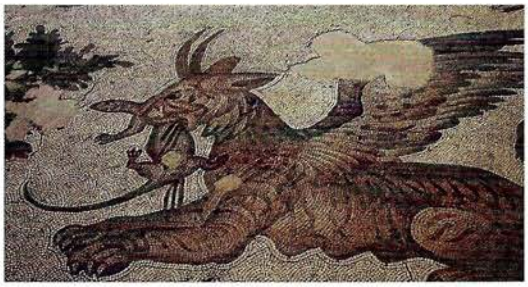
11 Museum of the Great Palace Mosaics

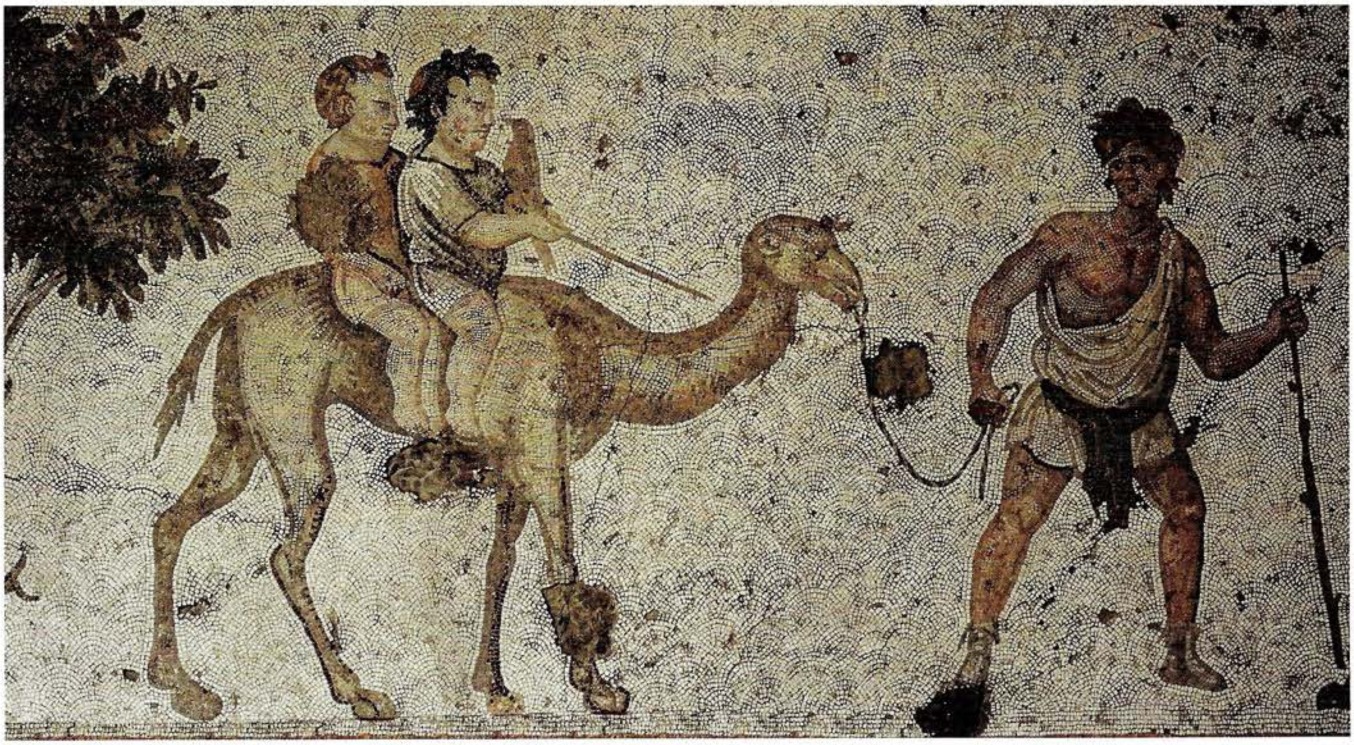
Preserved in this humble museum behind the Blue Mosque and beneath the city's most elegant bazaar are floor mosaics from the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors, which once sprawled down the hillside between the Hippodrome and the Sea of Marmara. Late-antique mosaics (AD450–550), some of the finest of their kind, vividly portray animals and people. One longs to bring them to life with the wipe of a damp cloth.

Büyük Saray
Mozaikler Müzesi
Arasta Bazaar, Sultanahmet
Summer 9–7, winter 9–5, closed Mon
Tram: Sultanahmet
+90 212 518 1205
muze.gov.tr
(look for 'Mosaic Museum')









This page The Great Palace mosaics include an elephant, a date-harvesting simian, two children astride a dromedary, and a mythical beast eating a reptile, as well as scenes of daily life

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Çemberlitaş

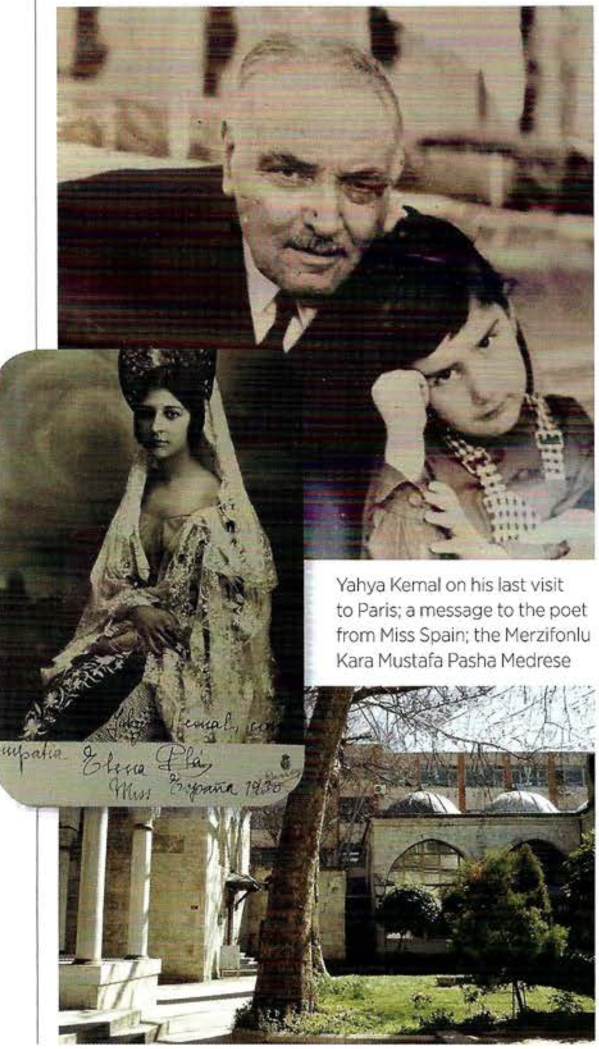
12 Yahya Kemal Museum

For a moment of bookish quiet after the palaver of the Grand Bazaar, head to the Yahya Kemal Museum in the courtyard of the Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha Medrese. Born in Skopje, Macedonia, to a prominent Ottoman family, Yahya Kemal became a student of French Romantic poetry while exiled in Paris for his opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid II.

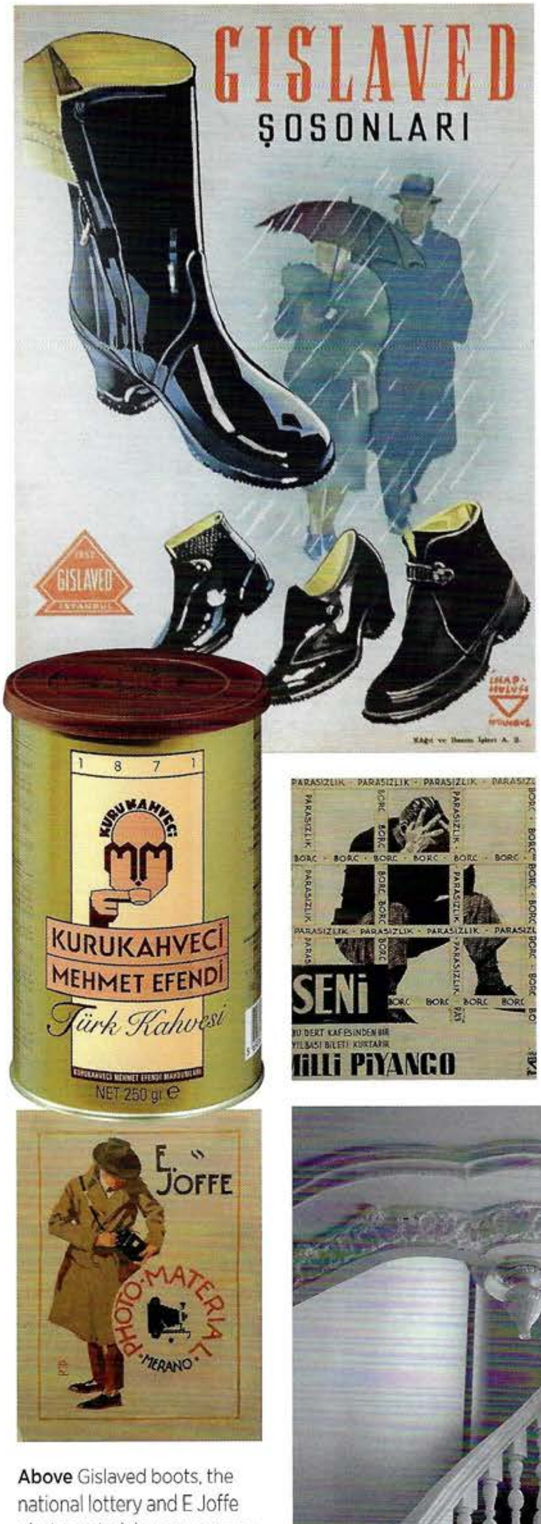
By the time the Republic was inaugurated in 1923, he had established himself as the pre-eminent poetic voice of the nascent Turkish nation. This earned him a place in the first Turkish parliament, and a second career as a politician and diplomat, with postings to Lisbon and Karachi. The material artefacts here – letters, passports, photos, as well as his writing desk from Istanbul's celebrated Park Otel and an ingenious stand-up valise – have been lovingly assembled by his friend and confidant Nihad Sâmi Banarlı.

A knowledge of Turkish will help in reading the poetry and deciphering the life, but even without you come away with a sense of what it was to be a cosmopolitan, literary Turk in the first half of the 20th century.

Yahya Kemal Müzesi *Kara Mustafa Paşa Medresesi, Yeniçeriler Cad 43, Beyazıt*
Mon–Fri 10–4
Tram: Çemberlitaş or Beyazıt
+90 212 638 6145
istanbulfetihcemiyeti.org.tr



Yahya Kemal on his last visit to Paris; a message to the poet from Miss Spain; the Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha Medrese



Atmeydanı

13 Cumhuriyet Museum and Art Gallery

Fans of packaging and graphics will enjoy a two-room homage to the father of Turkish graphics, İhap Hulusi Görey, at the end of the Hippodrome. The museum occupies a wing of the Art Nouveau Rector's Building of Marmara University.

İhap Hulusi created the iconic 1930s logo for Kurukahveci Mehmet Efendi coffee, still in use. He designed banknotes, too, adverts for social housing, the national lottery, Kodak and footwear, and the first book introducing the Republic's new alphabet: on the cover a little girl reads with Mustafa Kemal.

His watercolour posters set the bar for the strong tradition that thrives to this day. An interesting diversion from the otherwise Byzantine and Ottoman flavour of Sultanahmet.

Marmara Üniversitesi Cumhuriyet Müzesi
Atmeydanı, Sultanahmet
Tues–Sun 10–5
Tram: Sultanahmet
+90 212 518 1600
www.cumhuriyetmuzesi.marmara.edu.tr/en

Above Gislaved boots, the national lottery and E Joffe photo materials were among the 1930s clients of the graphic designer İhap Hulusi Görey. Mehmet Efendi coffee still proudly uses his logo
Right Art Nouveau stairs by Raimondo d'Aronco lead to the museum's İhap Hulusi Görey Gallery

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Beyazıt

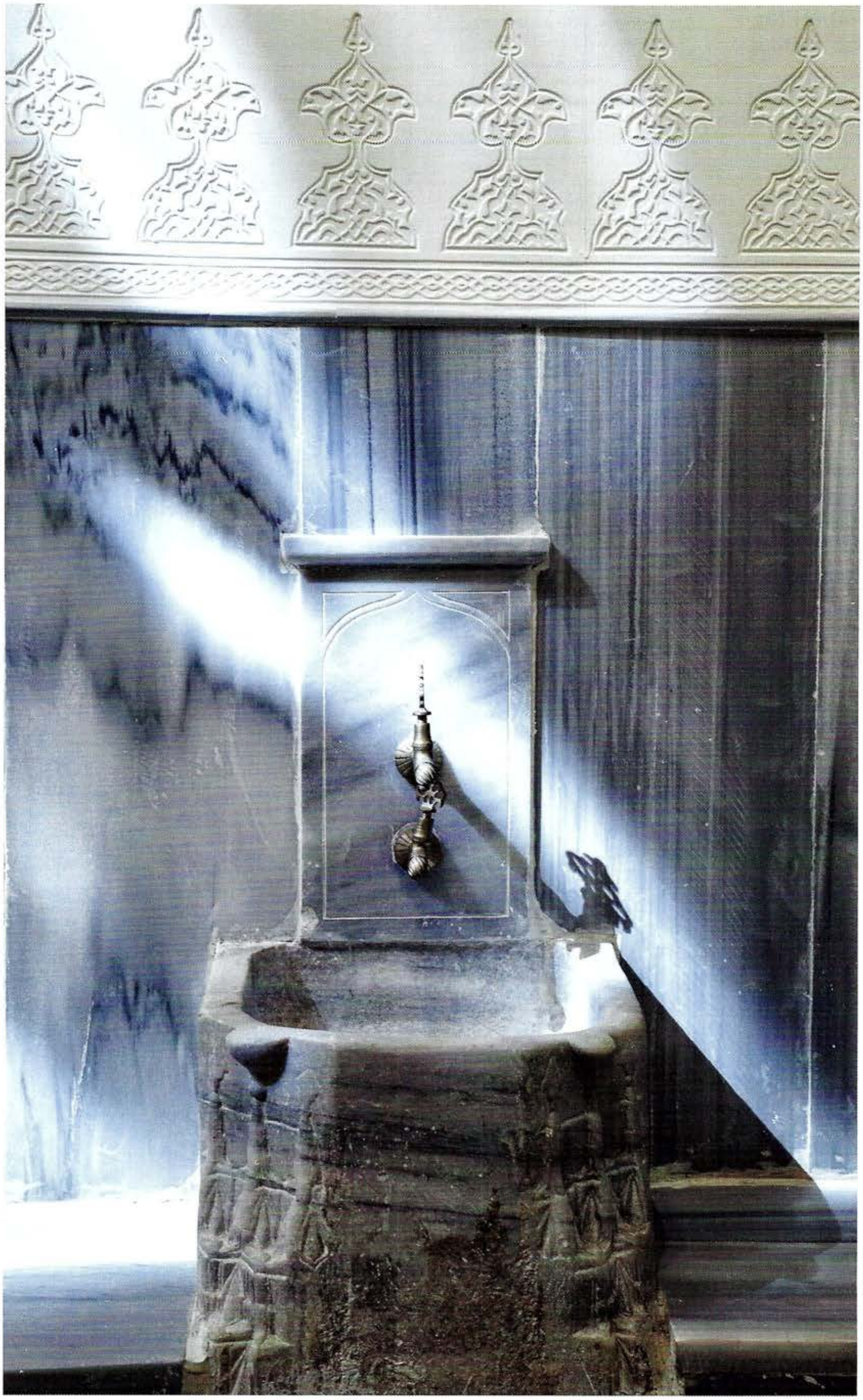
14 Beyazıt II Museum of Hamam Culture

This early-16th-century Turkish bath reopened as a museum in 2015. Easily reached from Beyazıt Square (two tram stops from Sultanahmet), the huge building is dwarfed by Istanbul University's even huger Faculty of Letters. It is known locally as the Patrona Halil Hamam, after a rebellious Albanian who worked as an attendant here when he was dismissed as a Janissary, and led the 1730 uprising that ended the Tulip Period. The handsome restoration was the brainchild of the art historian Nurhan Atasoy.

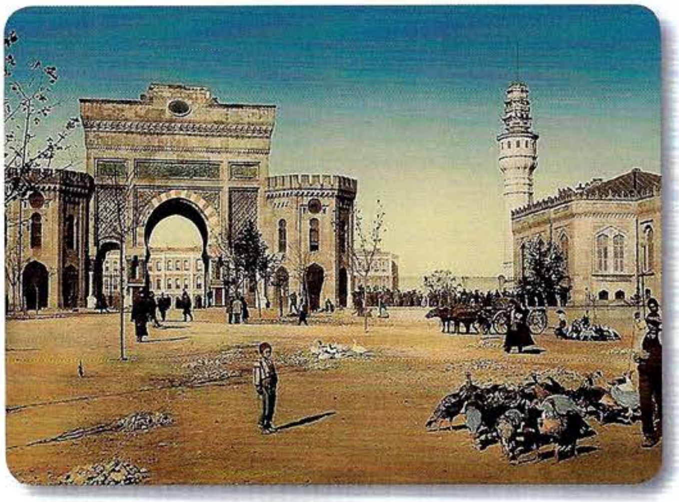
Built in 1507 or thereabouts by Gülbahar Hatun, one of Beyazıt II's two wives and mother of Selim I, it affords above all a chance to examine an Ottoman masterpiece and one of the city's larger hamams without getting undressed. There are interesting objects inside, however, from *nalin* (bath clogs) to exquisitely embroidered towels and napkins, metal soap-holders like tiny vanity cases, and silver-mounted pumice stones.

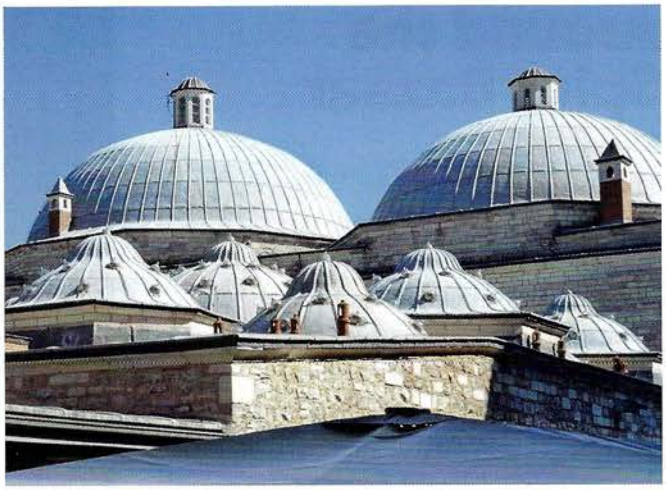
The site of the hamam was the city's necropolis during the Hellenic and Roman periods. The final section displays 6th-century Byzantine fragments of three churches excavated during the baths' restoration.

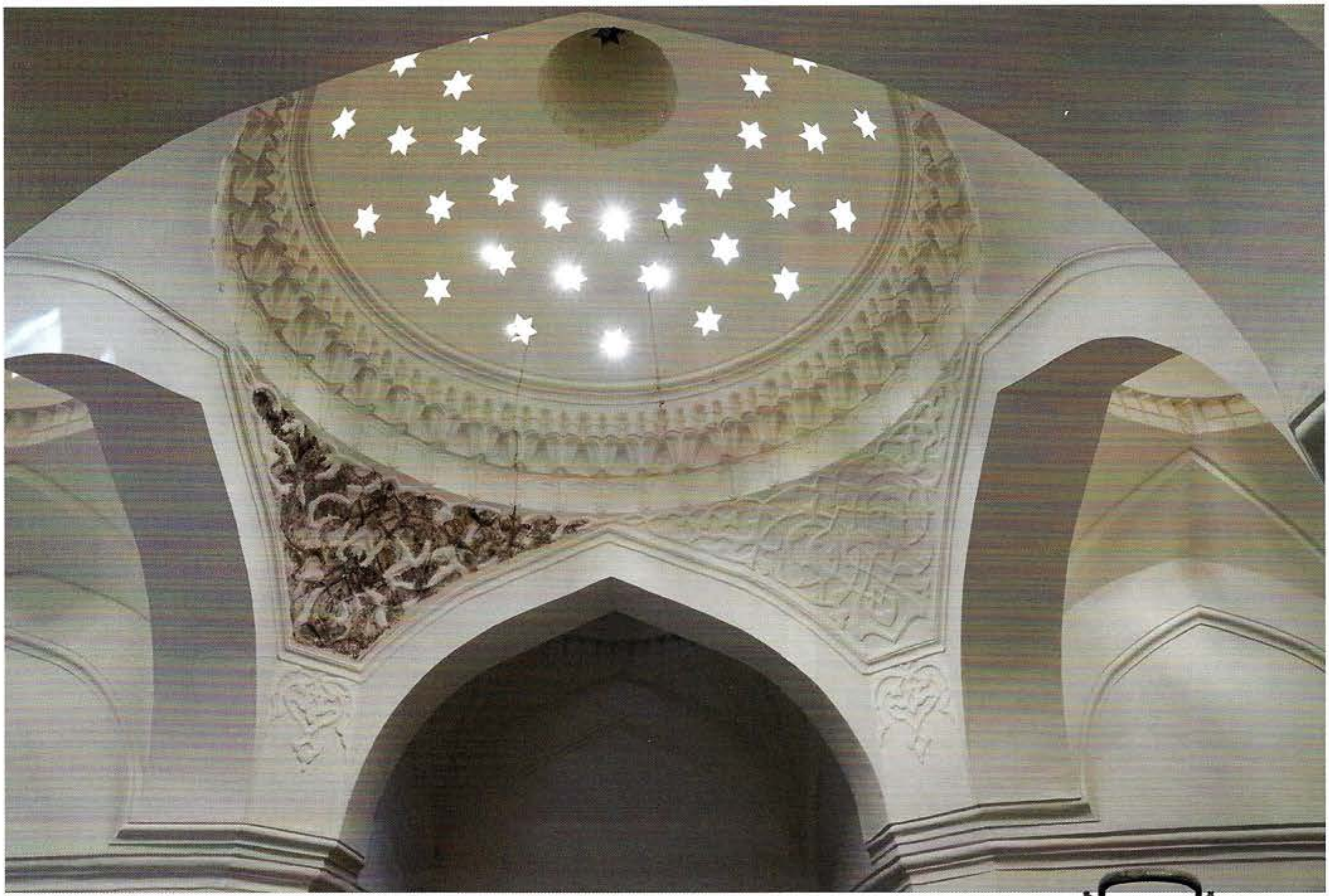
II. Beyazıt Türk Hamam Kültürü Müzesi
Derviş Mehmed Sok, Vezneciler, Beyazıt
Tues–Sun 9.30–4.30
Metro: Vezneciler
Tram: Laleli
+90 212 440 0000 (ext 16120/1)
turkhamamkulturu.istanbul.edu.tr

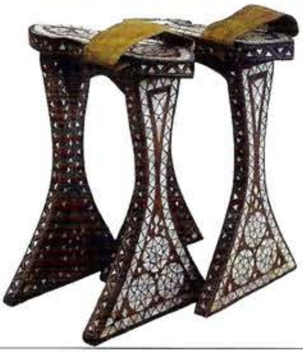


PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ





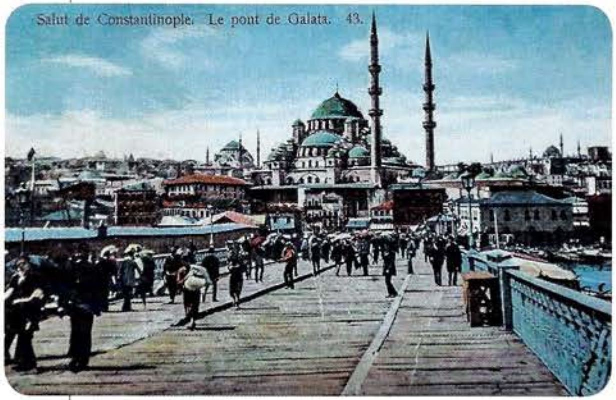


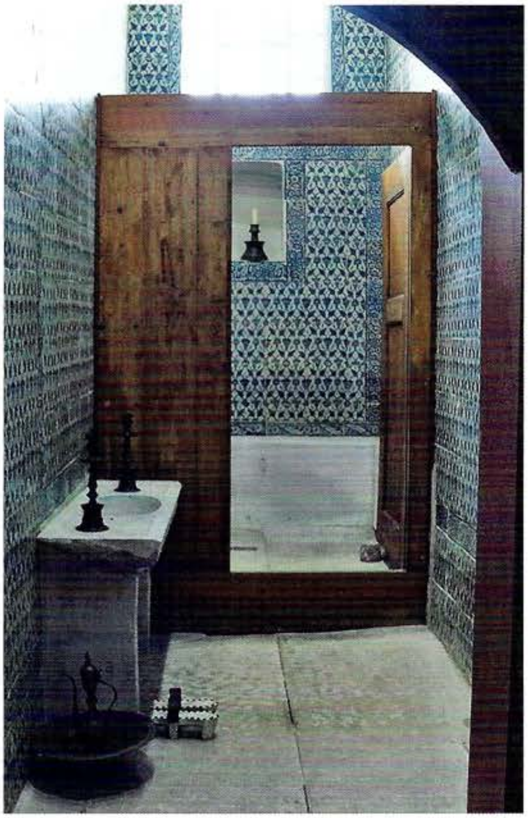


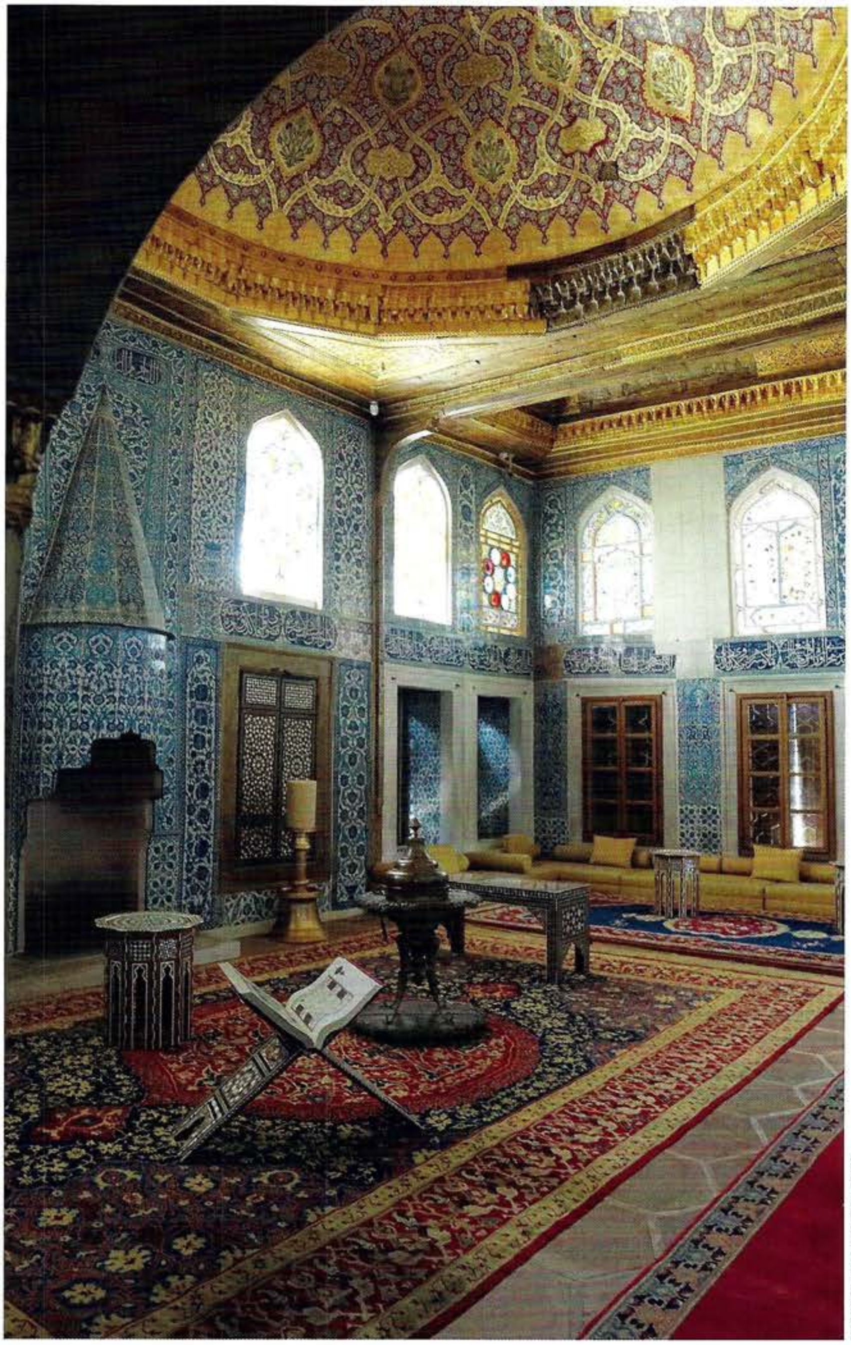
Top left Beyazıt Square, c1900
Top right The many-domed 16th-century Beyazıt II Hamam
Opposite and above A marble basin and traces of decoration in a dome, lovingly conserved
Bottom row Notable artefacts include ultra-tall 19th-century *nalin* (bath clogs), towels and napkins embroidered in gold, and soap-holders in the shape of miniature vanity cases

Around the Spice Bazaar

The lure of the Old City's historic port, once Istanbul's commercial heart, is the colourful Spice Bazaar – and Pandeli with its famous blue tiles, a must for lunch. Few go for its museums, but they are missing out on the Iznik tiles of the Sultan's Lodge, the fine 1909 central post office and the nostalgic Orient Express terminal







PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Eminönu

15 The Sultan's Lodge at the Yeni Cami

While the nearby Rüstem Pasha Mosque with its profusion of 16th-century Iznik tiles is closed for restoration, this is a great place for your Iznik fix, or simply a reprieve from the clamour of Eminönü. The tiles are the draw, though they are 17th- and not 16th-century, but the whole restoration of the Sultan's Lodge (Hünkâr Kasrı) is excellent – see the painted wooden door frames with gold-leaf inlay. The entrance is through an archway behind the Yeni Cami (or the Queen Mother's New Mosque, as it is properly called), then up a long stone ramp.

Yeni Cami Hünkâr Kasrı
Eminönü Daily 10–5.30
Tram or ferry: Eminönü

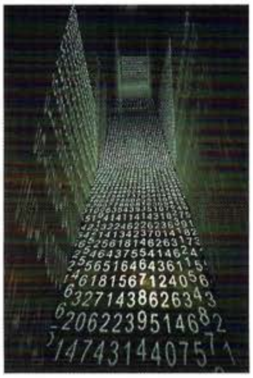
Above The chamber that inspired Sir Mark Sykes's Turkish Room at Sledmere in Yorkshire (*Cornucopia* 59), newly restored by the neighbouring Istanbul Chamber of Commerce
Top left Postcard of the Yeni Cami across the old Galata Bridge. The Sultan's Lodge is the red-roofed building next to the mosque. It stands on what is left of the Byzantine sea walls
Left The 17th-century WC has been meticulously retained

Eminönu
16 İşbank Museum

KÜÇÜK CARİ
HESAPLAR

What this small museum opposite the Sultan's Lodge lacks in English information it makes up for in atmosphere. The former bank building, with its dramatic marble staircase and characteristic glass roof, still has smart brass and polished wood counters and, downstairs, the magnificent old vaults and safe-deposit boxes. Some boxes have been customised by an artistic hand, perhaps the same one responsible for the light installation of projected numbers in the adjoining corridor. Exhibits upstairs explain the history of İşbank, Turkey's first public bank, created under Atatürk. Counting machines and computers bring it all to life.

İş Bankası Müzesi
Bankacılar Cad 2, Eminönü
Daily 10–6, closed Mon
Tram: Eminönü
Ferry: Eminönü
+90 212 511 1331
muze.isbank.com.tr

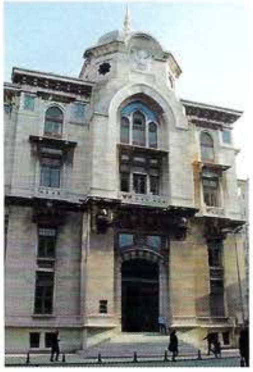


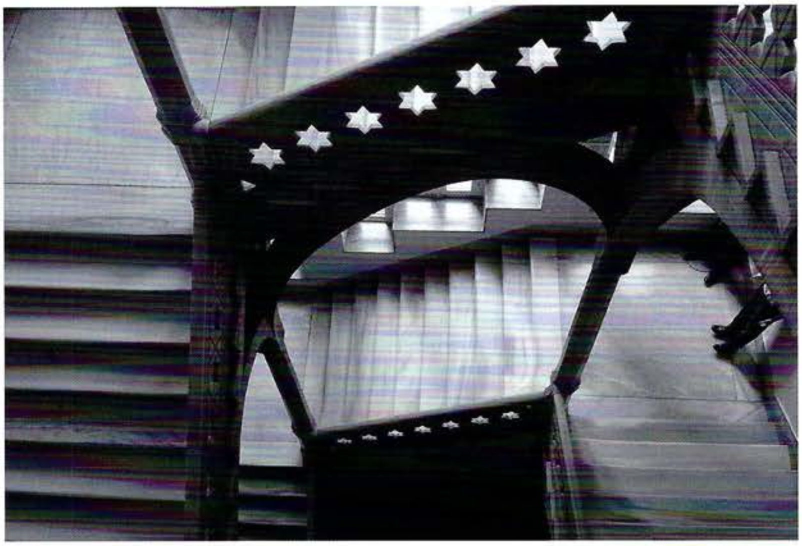
Top and above Ancient counter meets modern art at the İşbank Museum

Sirkeci
17 Postal Museum

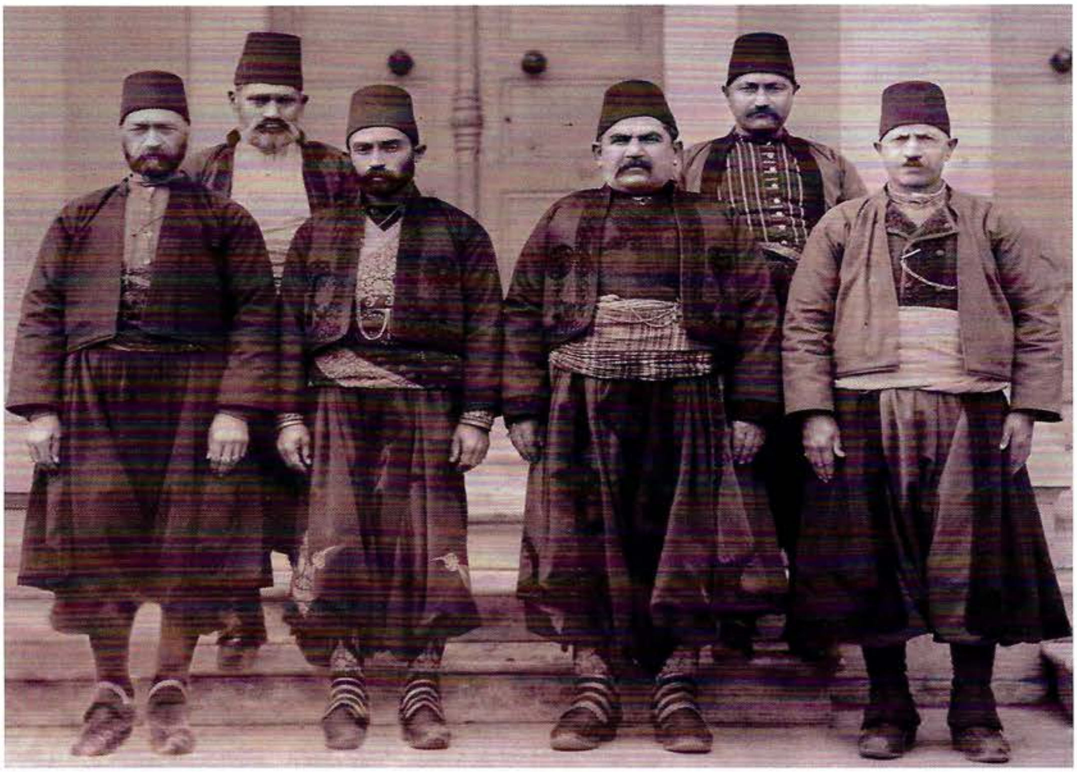
Temporarily closed for restoration, the museum in the 1909 central post office is well worth waiting for. Fans of the architect Vedat Tek (1873–1942) will once again have an excuse to gaze at the late-Ottoman building's elegant curves and angles. At the far end of the building, the museum's marble staircase, with its star apertures and marble beams, leads up to exhibits of stamps, stiff mannequins of postmen, and early telephones. There are almost more "No photography" signs than exhibits, but the views from the window onto the bijou tiled Hobyar Mosque, Vedat Tek's only mosque, make the climb worthwhile. That is not to say the museum lacks interest. One can see the telephone on which Turkey's first phone call was made, in 1911, one learns that postmen were called *Tatarlar* (Tatars) and were sometimes armed – and that countries had their own postboxes. The Austrian one from Karaköy is in the first room. The top floor has a magnificent Oriental ceiling and good views of the working central post office.

PTT Istanbul Müzesi
Büyük Postane Cad,
Bahçekapı, Eminönü
Mon–Fri 8.30–5.30
(closed 12.30–1.30)
Tram: Sirkeci
Ferry: Eminönü
+90 212 520 9037





Above Vedat Tek's eclectic 1909 Sirkeci Post Office
Right The marble stairs and star-studded banisters
Below Parcel force: the early postmen were fierce Tatars



Gülhane

18 Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Literary Museum

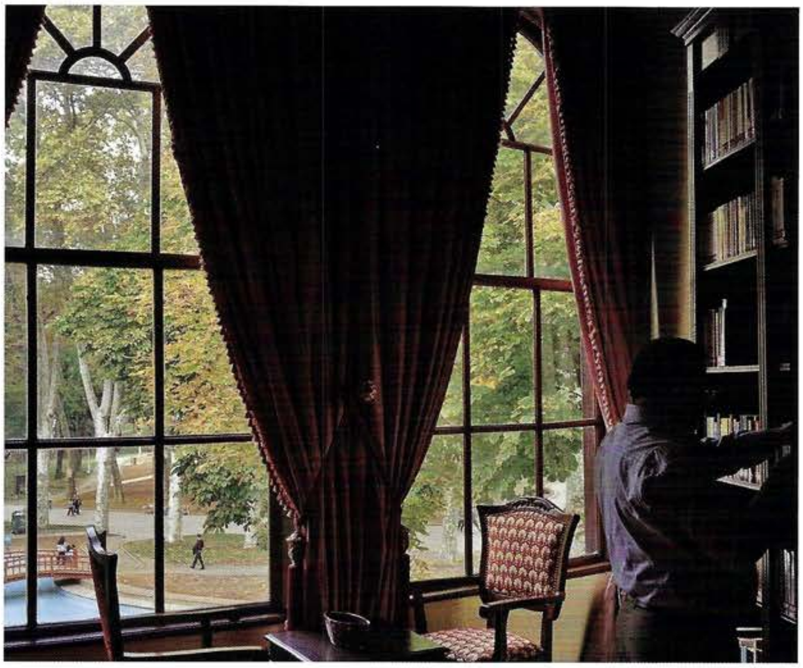
The heptagonal Alay Kiosk, set in the thick outer walls of Topkapı Palace at Gülhane Park, is the only part of the imperial complex with more than a distant view of the outside world. From behind its golden window bars, the sultan would observe processions and comings and goings at the Sublime Porte across the road; the kiosk was also where he received gifts.

After a brief spell as a wedding registry office, the building is now the city's most elegant library, with original trompe-l'oeil niches. Inside, as well as books, cabinets display the spectacles and typewriters of Turkish literary lions.

But the real interest for the non-Turkish-speaker is the building. Tucked into a corner, overlooking the lovely park, is a reading room open to all. Don't miss the lower level, where a central beam with branches makes it all feel a bit like a tree house.

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Edebiyat Müze Kütüphanesi
Alay Köşkü, Gülhane Park
Mon–Sat 8.30–8.30
Tram: Gülhane
+90 212 520 2081
ahtemkutuphane.gov.tr

Top Gülhane Park
Right A view to the park from the reading room
Left The pipe, pens and watch of the writer Hulki Aktunç
Below Daguerreotype of the Alay Kiosk, an imperial viewing lodge, now a literary museum

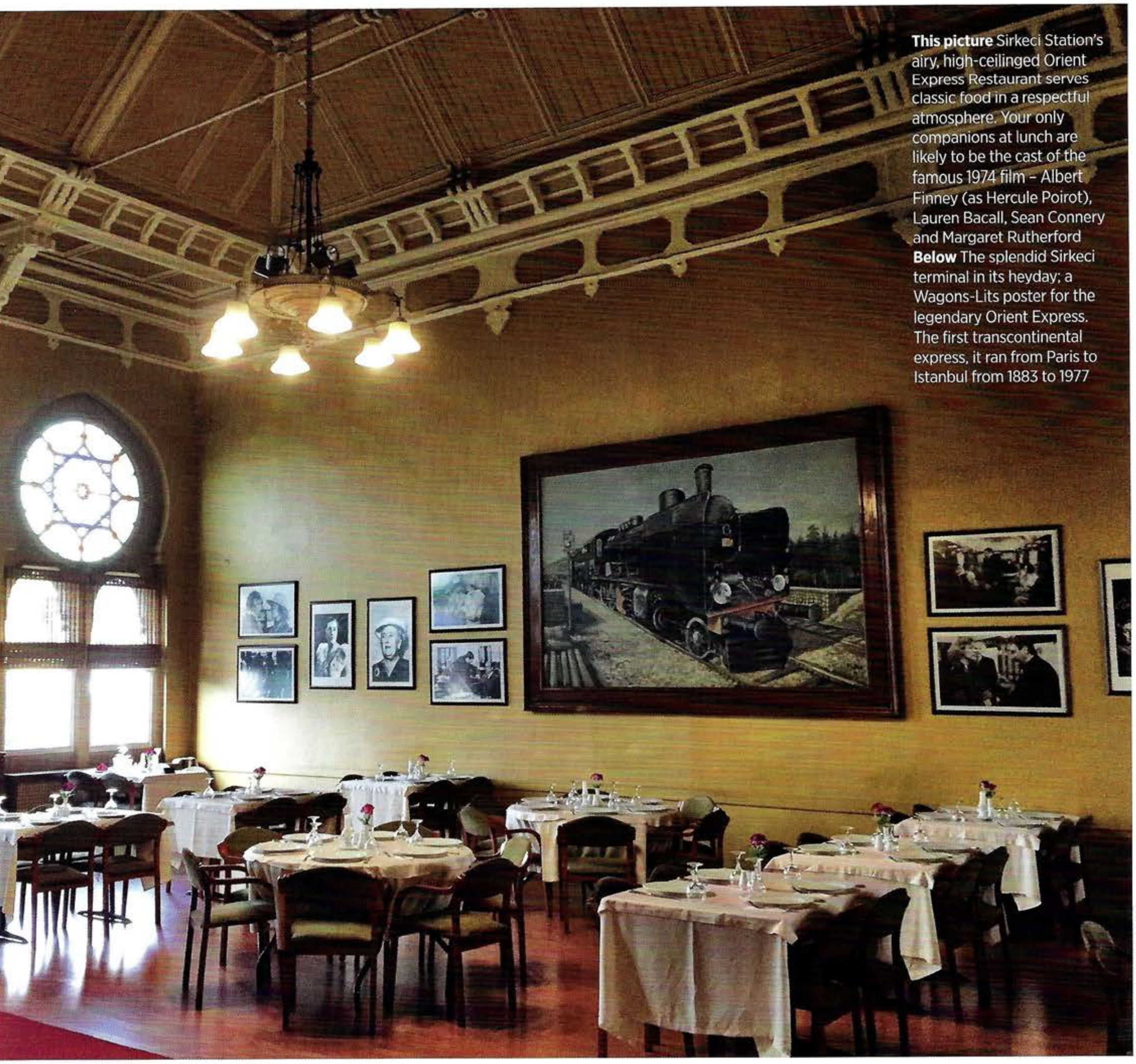


HULKI AKTUNÇ

Sirkeci

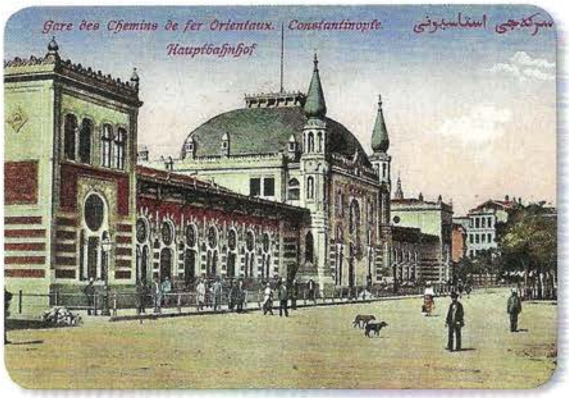
19 Istanbul Railway Museum

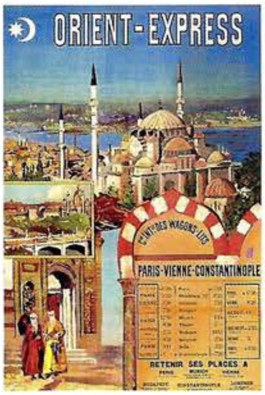
Modern art critics might describe Sirkeci Station as "a hybrid space": trains sit at platforms behind fences, locals rush to the Marmaray metro line, and the Orient Express Restaurant serves up nostalgia to visitors in a high-ceilinged room (above). Tucked away



This picture Sirkeci Station's airy, high-ceilinged Orient Express Restaurant serves classic food in a respectful atmosphere. Your only companions at lunch are likely to be the cast of the famous 1974 film – Albert Finney (as Hercule Poirot), Lauren Bacall, Sean Connery and Margaret Rutherford **Below** The splendid Sirkeci terminal in its heyday; a Wagons-Lits poster for the legendary Orient Express. The first transcontinental express, it ran from Paris to Istanbul from 1883 to 1977

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ


Gare des Chemins de fer Orientaux. Constantinople.
Hauptbahnhof
سركجى استانبولى

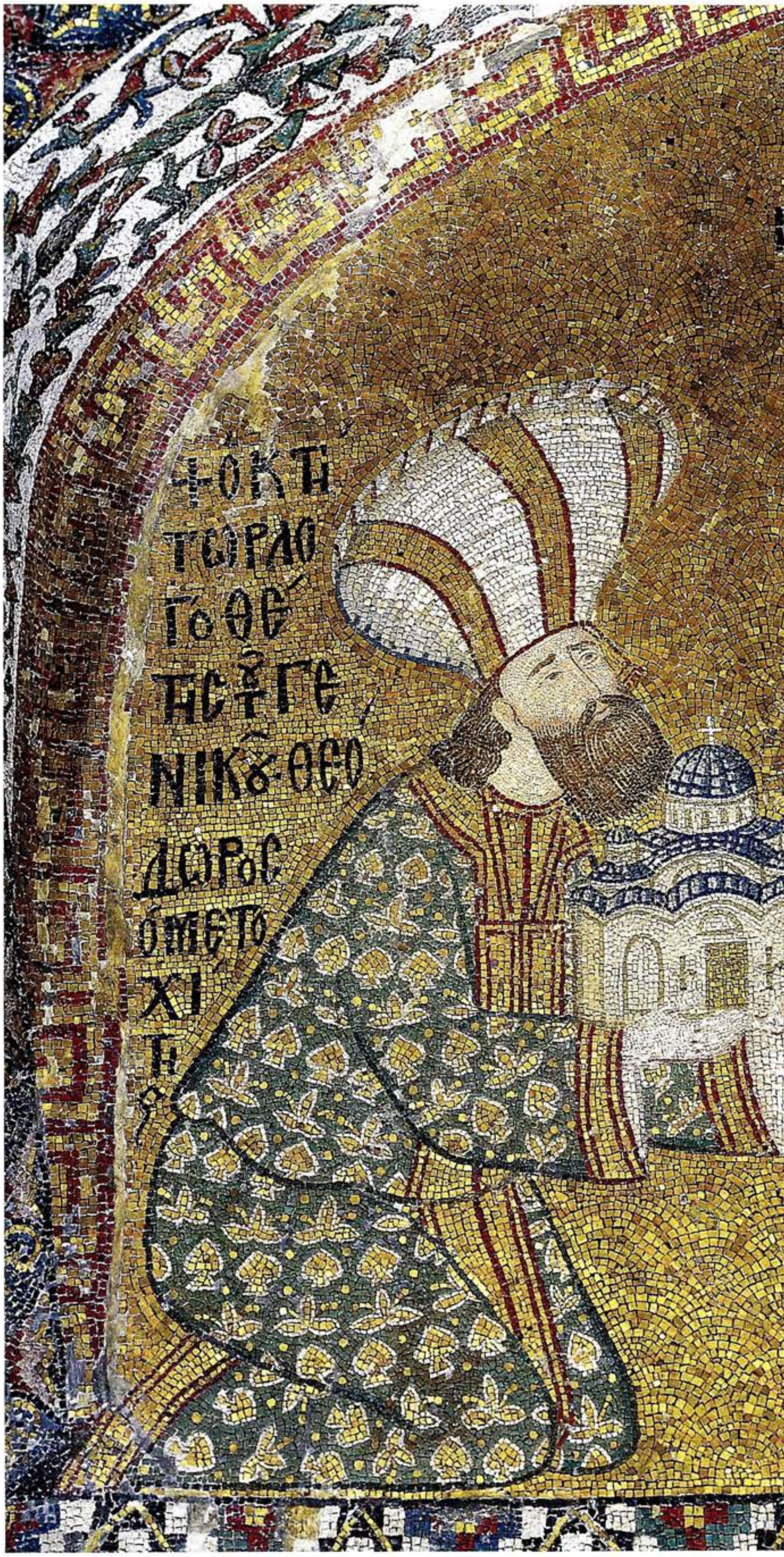

ORIENT-EXPRESS
PARIS-VIENNE-CONSTANTINOPLE
RETENIR SES PLACES A

next to the restaurant is this tiny museum: a 44 sqm room filled with artefacts from more than a century of the railways in Turkey. A station bell, telegraph machines, ticket stubs, silver sets used on the Orient Express, iron licence plates, a train window and even the front of an old train make maximum use of a space smaller than an Amsterdam apartment. It makes for a pleasant diversion: one can imagine a better railway museum, but scarcely a more charming one.

TCDD İstanbul Demiryolu Müzesi
Tues–Sat 9–5
(closed 12.30–1)
Tram and metro (Marmaray line): Sirkeci
Ferry: Eminönü
+90 212 520 6575, ext 7885
tcdd.gov.tr (look for 'Museums')

Relics of Byzantium

Within a stone's throw of the Land Walls above the Golden Horn, the Church of the Chora (Kariye Museum) is famed for its Byzantine mosaics and frescoes. Alas, many of them are under wraps for restoration – but there is still plenty worth seeing there and at the nearby palace of Tekfur Sarayı



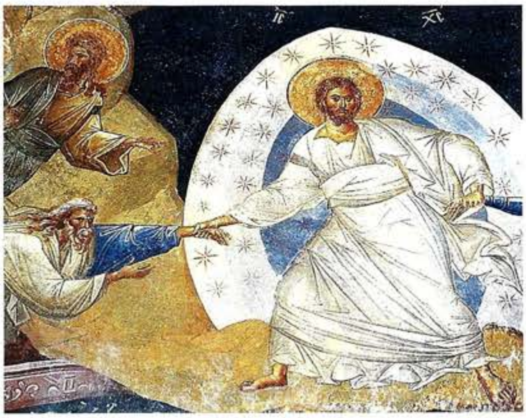
Edirnekapı

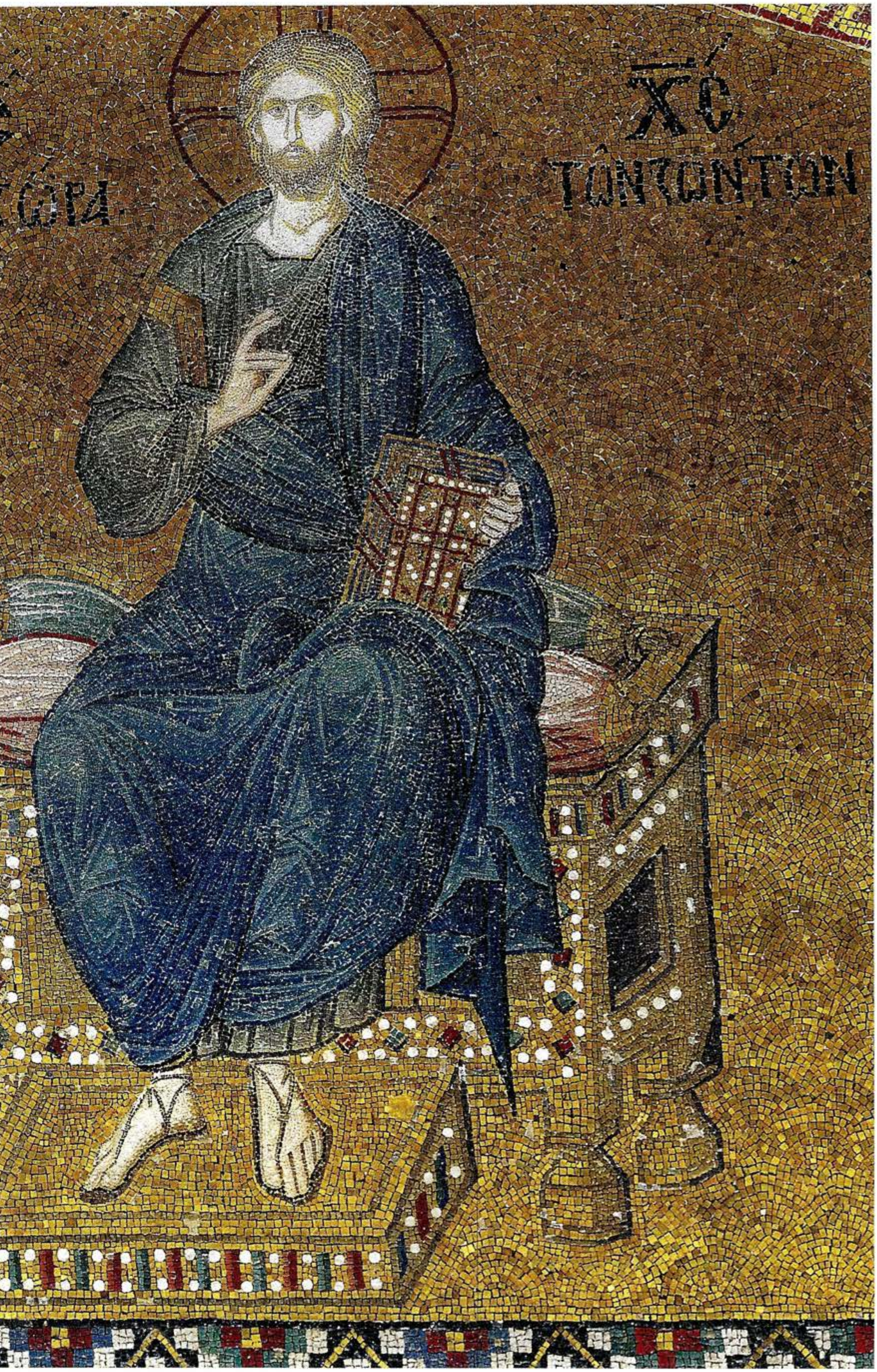
20 Kariye Museum

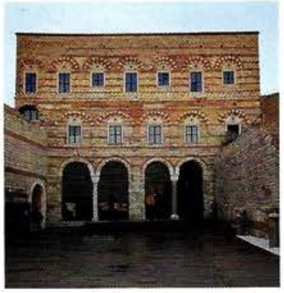
The product of a major overhaul by the scholar and prime minister Theodore Metochites c1321, the church's art bristles with elegance, intelligence and fascinating juxtapositions: the infancy and miracle of Christ in the outer narthex, the infancy of the Virgin in the inner narthex, and preparations for the Last Judgement and our ultimate salvation in the funerary chapel. Even the few mosaics visible during restoration merit the trip.

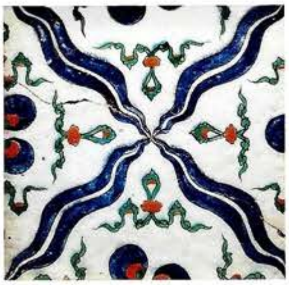
Kariye Müzesi *Edirnekapı Winter 9–4.30, summer 9–6 +90 212 631 9241*

Above A 1900s postcard
Right Theodore Metochites presents a model of his church to Christ, c1321
Below Christ raising Adam and Eve from their tombs, in a fresco of the Resurrection in the funerary chapel – a landmark in Renaissance art, currently being restored









Edirnekapı

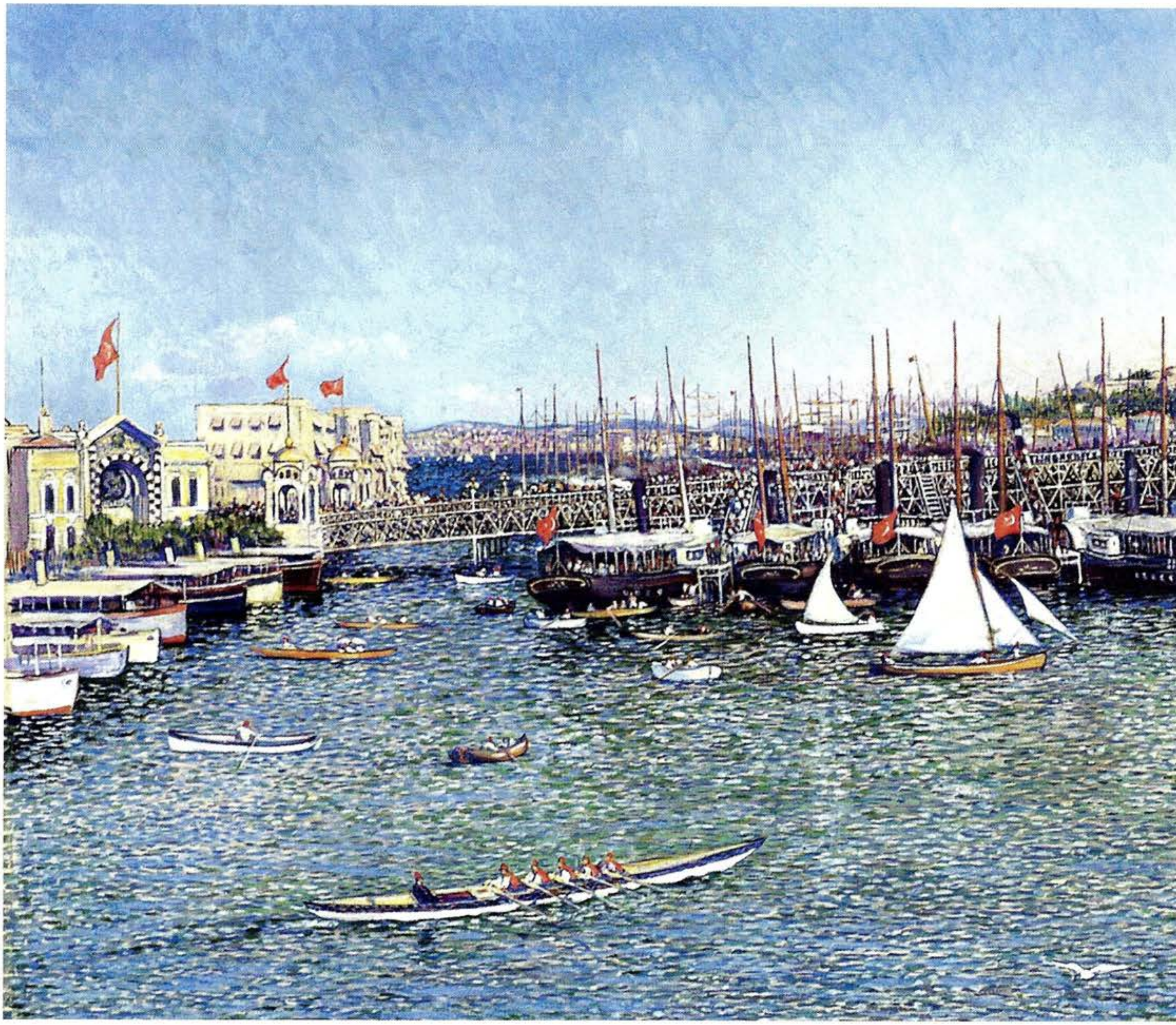
21 Tekfur Sarayı

From the Kariye, move swiftly on to the nearby Land Walls, where it is surprising to find the Italianate Tekfur Sarayı surviving from the 14th century. It is the last building left of the great citadel palace of Blachernae ordered by Michael VIII Palaiologos (1282–1328), who cleaned up after retaking Constantinople from the Crusaders in 1204. It was long a romantic ruin, and its new life as a museum has entailed a certain loss of charm, but there are details to savour, such as the tiny chapel on the top floor projecting on corbels, and the sheer sense of scale in the interior that was missing before.

Exhibits are limited, though clever interactive videos bring neighbouring monuments to life, concentrating on a curious episode in the 1720s when the dying Iznik ceramics industry was briefly moved here. The tiger stripes of the tiles made here are found as far afield as Crimea and Cairo, but this was Iznik's swansong.

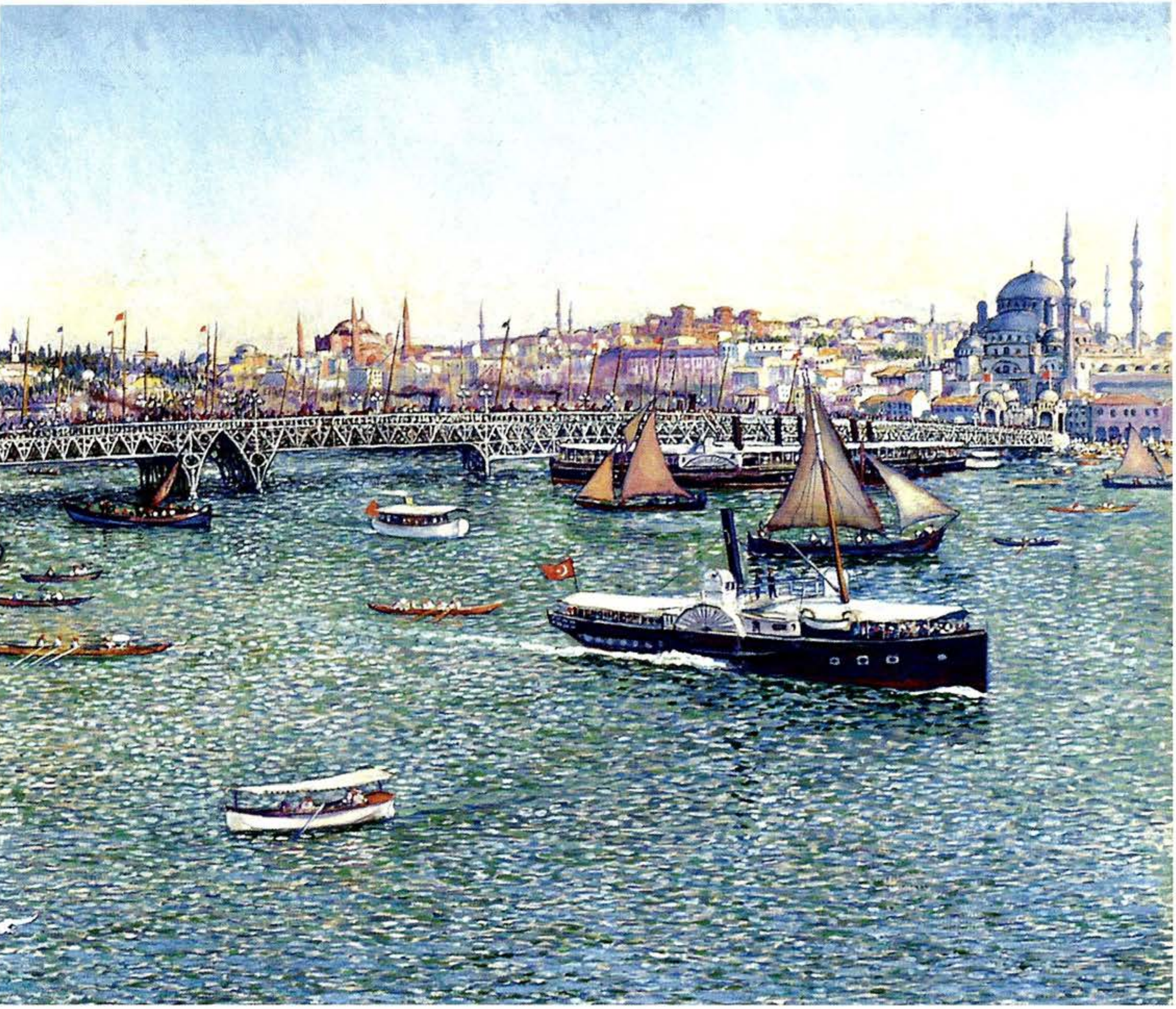
Tekfur Saray Müzesi
Edirnekapı. Daily 9–6
tekfursarayi.istanbul

Top The newly restored Palace of Porphyrogennetos
Above An Iznik tile from kilns built in the 1720s bears the classic tiger-stripe and cintamani motif

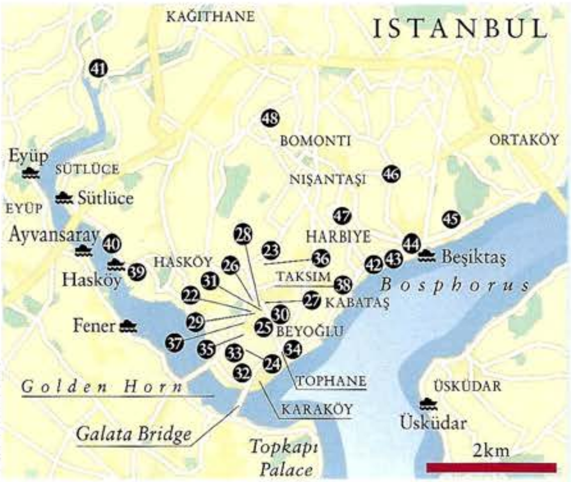


The European City

From the Old City we cross the Galata Bridge to bohemian Beyoğlu, the creative, rebellious heart of the modern city, where a new wave of inventive private museums has emerged since the tear gas of 2013. Our tour takes us up the Golden Horn, where we discover the world's largest toy cupboard, then to the Bosphorus, its shores graced by the splendid Dolmabahçe Palace, and finally to Bomonti, where Ara Güler's distinctive black-and-white images, taken over seven decades, have found a fitting home



TC CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI MILLI SARAYLAR IDARESI BAŞKANLIĞI, ENV. NO. 11/595


ISTANBUL
KAĞITHANE
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BOMONTI
ORTAKÖY
Eyüp
SÜTLÜCE
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㉜
TOPHANE
ÜSKÜDAR
Golden Horn
KARAKÖY
Üsküdar
Galata Bridge
Topkapı Palace
2km

SUSANNA HICKLING

Museums of the European City
The old European quarter was centred on the heights of Pera, now Beyoğlu, which faces the historic peninsula crowned by the Topkapı. Cultural spaces, museums and galleries, old and new, cluster along its spine, İstiklâl Caddesi, formerly the Grand' Rue de Pera. From here it is an easy ride to the museums of the Golden Horn, the lower Bosphorus and its hinterland

Above: East meets West
Théodore 'Théo' van Rysselberghe (1862–1926), *Galata Bridge*, oil on canvas, 65 by 140 cm. A rare example of pointillism in Istanbul, this view by a Belgian artist was presented to Abdülhamid II by a compatriot, an engineer working on the new Baghdad Railway. Van Rysselberghe visited Istanbul in the 1890s and was a friend of Paul Signac, who would paint the Golden Horn in 1907

Beyoğlu's bounty

A few years ago the claim 'I never go to Beyoğlu any more' was almost a badge of honour for those mourning its supposed past sophistication, but cultural spaces are burgeoning again

The marvellously stubborn medieval beauty of the Galata Tower aside, Beyoğlu's architectural character is late 19th century, when Greek and Armenian architects mustered Italian refugees to confect the Neoclassical and Art Nouveau buildings that line the Grand' Rue de Pera, now İstiklâl Caddesi.

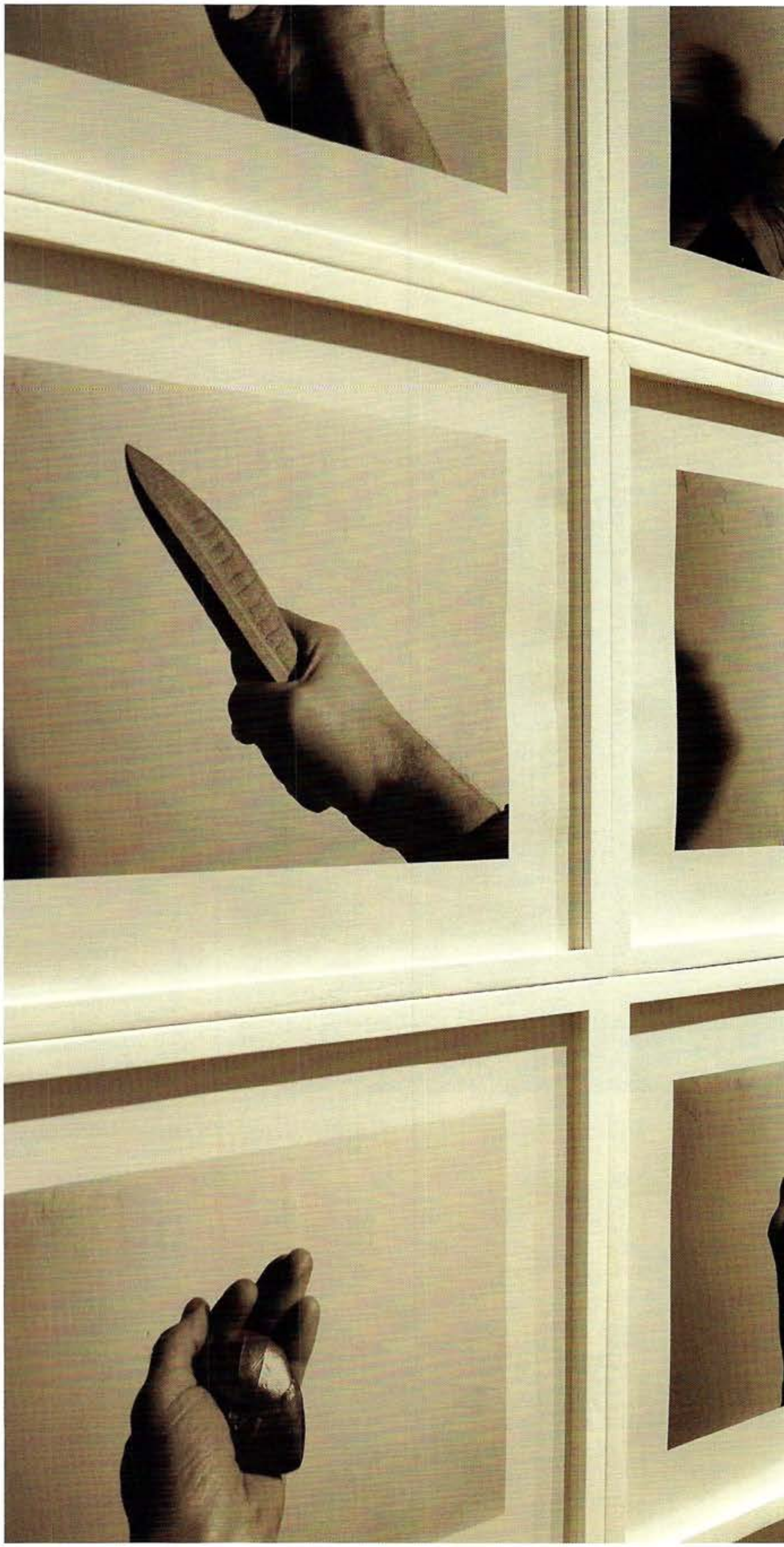
An ideal starting point would be Tepebaşı's Pera Museum. An easily walkable contemporary art circuit takes you via İstiklâl for whatever's up at the swish SALT Beyoğlu, and at Meşher (the original Arter).

Climb the worn marble stairs of Mısır Apartmanı (İstiklâl Cad 163) to find some of the city's most established contemporary galleries. Stop to refuel at the Circassian restaurant Ficcin or the small, genuine Şahin Lokantası.

A sedate stroll brings you back onto Meşrutiyet Caddesi, past the iconic Pera Palace Hotel, and on to Istanbul Modern's temporary home, a *fin-de-siècle* former club, where the photography is always interesting.

Free half-hourly shuttles run from the Pera Museum to Arter, the city's new answer to MoMA in Dolapdere, which, with the mega-galleries Dirimart and Pilevneli, has created a new centre of cultural gravity.

ISTANBUL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

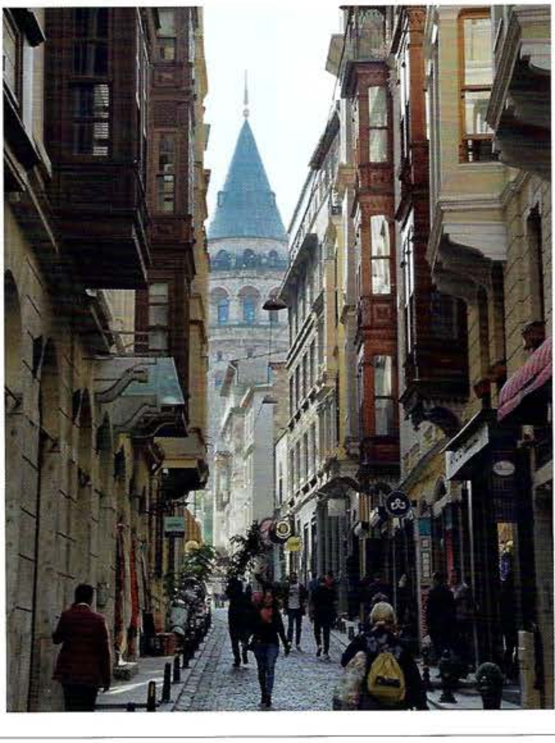


Istanbul's old Rive Gauche
Above A group in fancy dress pose for the Pera studio Sébah & Joaillier, c1890 (from *Journey to the East*, Istanbul Research Institute, 2015)
Right Osman Dinç's *A statue in 33 pictures* (1986), part of an inaugural exhibition, *Words Are Unnecessary*, at Beyoğlu's new art space Arter
Opposite, top The Galata Tower overlooks the Karaköy docks. In the foreground is the prow of a visiting Italian tall ship
Opposite, bottom Galata's chic Serdar-ı Ekrem Caddesi

Galata Tower

If you want to be remembered, build a strong tower. The Genoese finished this 67-metre Tower of Christ in 1348, and it continues to remind visitors of their once-great maritime republic. The railed observation deck provides the archetypal 360-degree Istanbul experience and an ideal place to survey both the Old City and the European City. The 14th-century traveller Ibn Battuta described Galata's bazaars as "good but filthy", and the district retained a seedy reputation until recently, but now is a harmless jangle of musical instrument shops, tourist wares and tradesmen's stores. If the tower is Galata's heart, Yüksek Kaldırım, a steep and ancient street, is its spine, and you'll still find cafés peddling Italianate cool along its ribs.

Galata Kulesi *Galata*
Daily 9–8.30
Metro: Şişhane
Restaurant open till 10
(booking recommended)
+90 212 293 8180



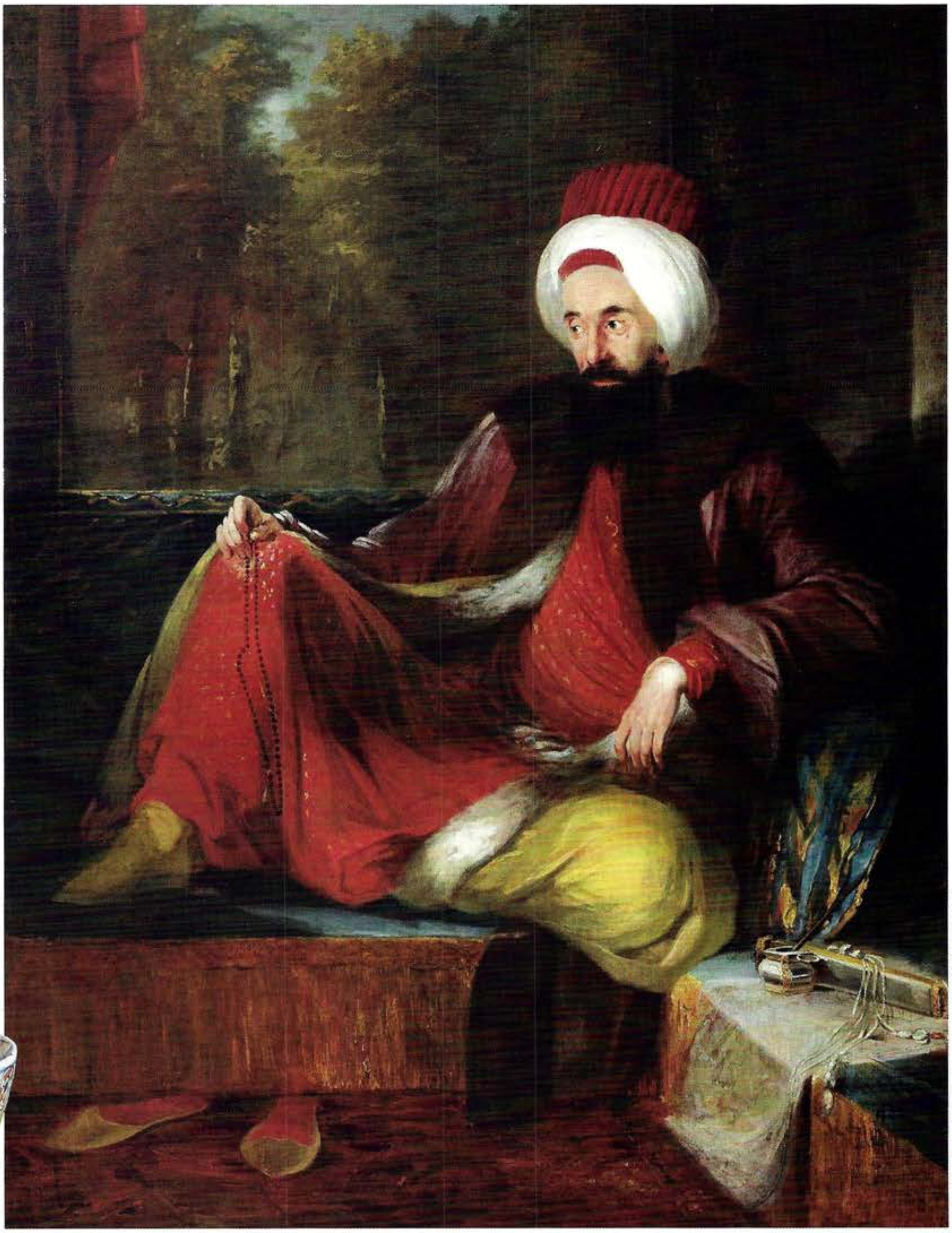
PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Tepebaşı

22 Pera Museum

A well-curated mix of the historical and the modern is spread over five floors here. The Pera opened in 2005, in the husk of the former Bristol Hotel, to house the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation's notable collections of pottery and Ottoman and Orientalist paintings, particularly works by Osman Hamdi Bey. These include the two young female musicians from 1880 and the museum's star attraction, *The Tortoise Trainer* from 1906 (opposite). There are vivid displays of Kütahya ceramics and Anatolian weights and measures. Temporary shows have ranged from Goya to Warhol and hard-hitting contemporary Turkish.

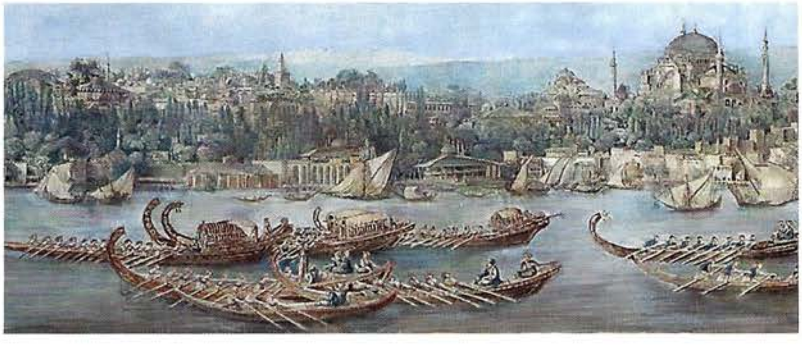
Pera Müzesi
Meşrutiyet Cad 65,
Tepebaşı
Tues–Sat 10–7, Sun 12–6
+90 212 334 9900
en.peramuzesi.org.tr



ALL IMAGES: SUNA & INAN KIRAÇ COLLECTION / PERA MUSEUM

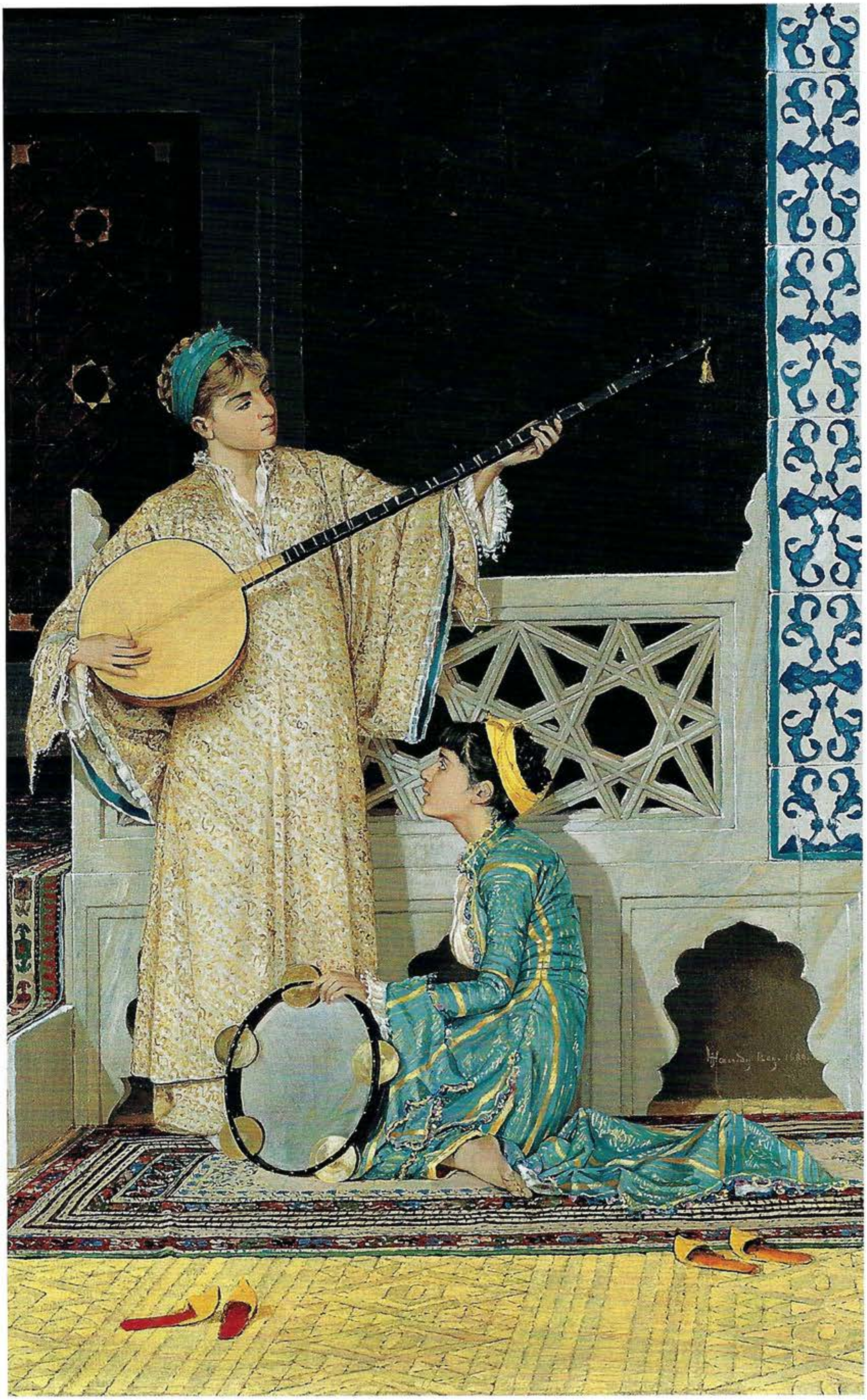
Top A lead weight (of about 40g) bearing the names of the Roman emperor Decius (249–251) and his sons. The museum's hoard of Anatolian weights and measures goes back to prehistoric times

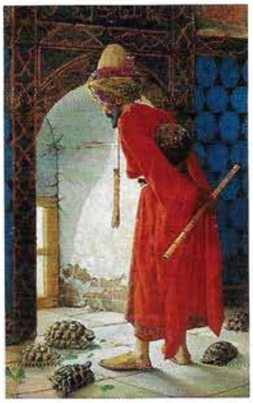
Above A colourful coffee cup from the first half of the 18th century, one of a thousand pieces of Kütahya pottery collected by the founders, Suna and İnan Kıraç



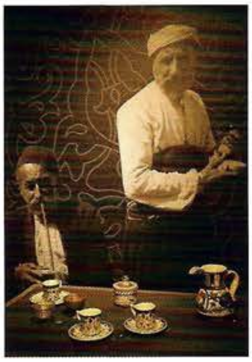
Above Frederik von Breda painted Yusuf Agah Efendi in 1794–96, when he was Turkey's first ambassador to London

Left A detail from *Panorama of Seraglio Point, by* Louis-François Cassas (1756–1827), a watercolour over two metres wide, based on drawings made in 1786. It hangs next to de Favray's oil of 1773 (p50). Caiques like these are displayed in the Naval Museum (p134)





Ottoman enigma
Osman Hamdi Bey, Turkey's only Orientalist, sets both these works in Bursa's Green Mosque. He painted strictly for a foreign audience, often using himself and members of his family as models
Above *The Tortoise Trainer* (1906) is a self-portrait. He wears the long red robes of a dervish and holds a *ney*. The inspiration appears to have been a Japanese print
Left *Two Musician Girls*, signed 'Osman Hamdey Bey, 1880'. The standing figure plays a beautiful long-necked *tanbur*
Below The world of Turkish coffee: vintage photographs and early-1900s Kütahya cups
Bottom The timeless refuge of the Pera Museum's café



MONICA FRITZ

Dolapdere

23 Arter

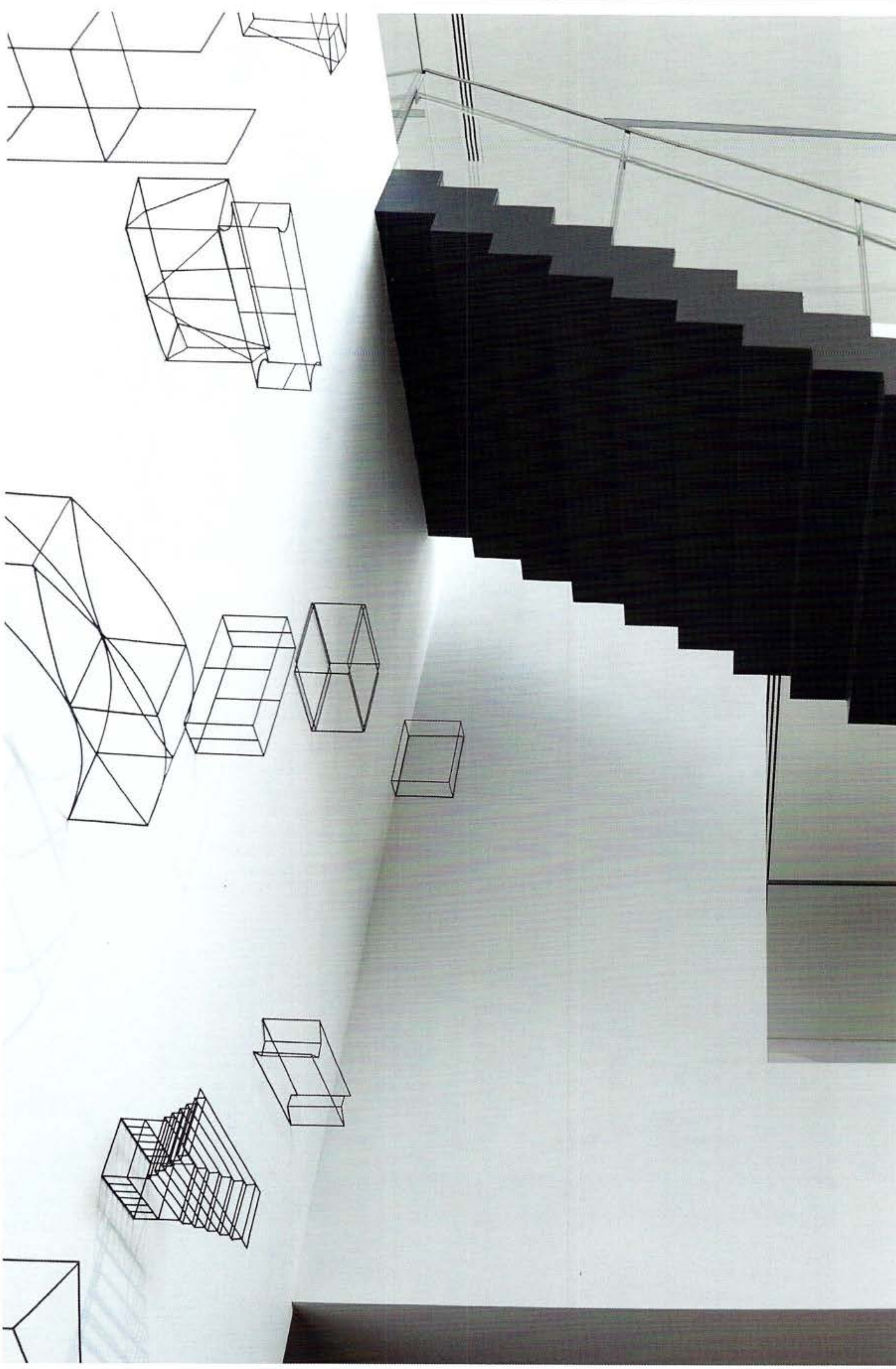
In the depths of Dolapdere (a short shuttle ride from the Pera Museum), Arter, Istanbul's newest contemporary art museum, is pharaonic in scale. The institution's bleeding-edge collection and sharp white galleries invite comparison with the great international museums: here, finally, is Istanbul's MoMA or Tate Modern, an institution with the clout to engage with its public on an international, not merely a local level.

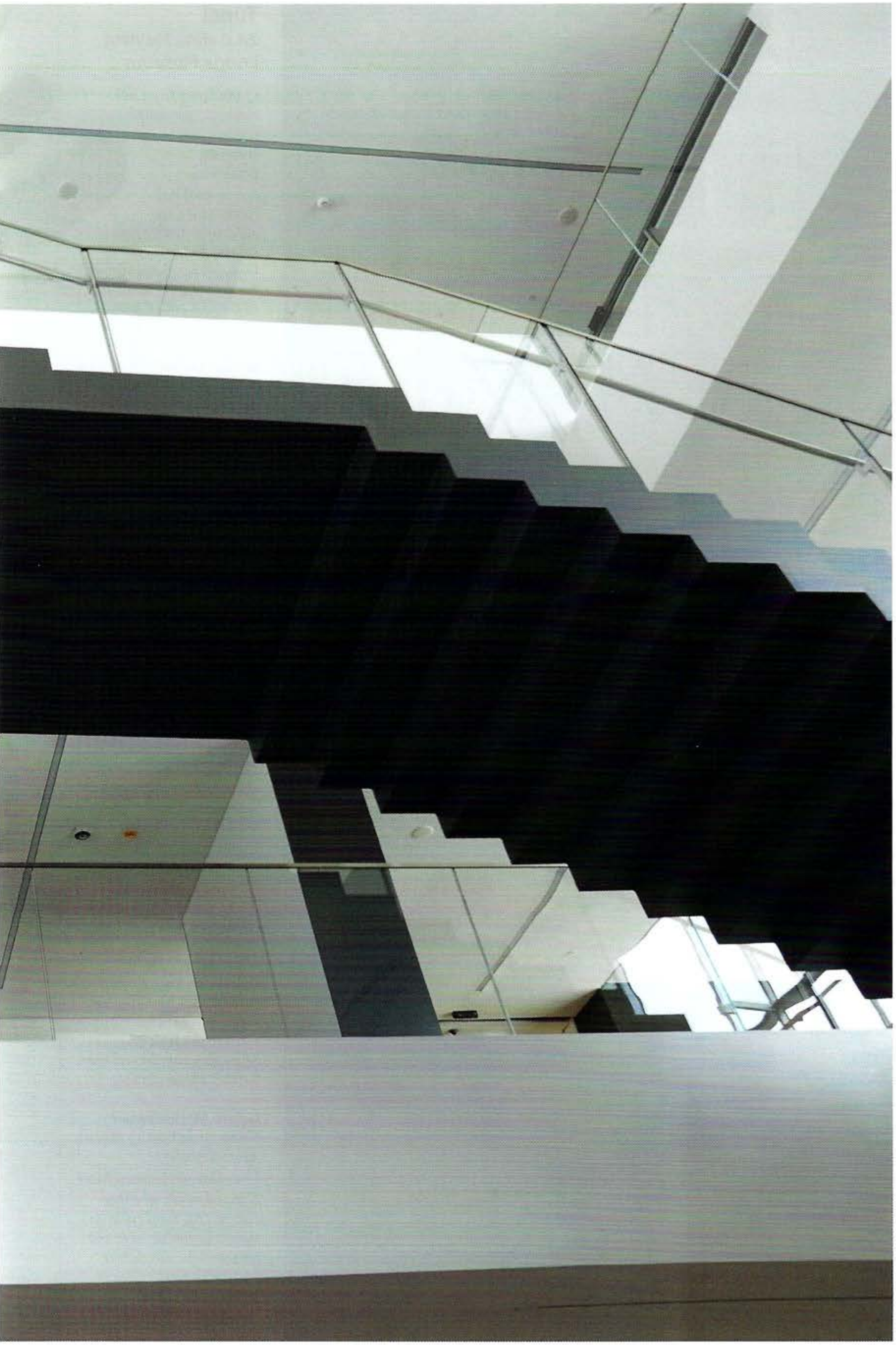
Arter opened in September 2019 with eight exhibitions curated from the Arter Collection, which has been in existence for 15 years (and for nearly a decade occupied an admirable space, now renamed Meşher, on İstiklâl Caddesi – see p113). In that time the collection – rooted in Turkish conceptual art but with a strong showing of foreign works – has established itself as arguably the most important in the country, rescuing work by older artists in danger of being lost, as well as commissioning new artists. (Read more on page 20.)

In so doing, Arter functions as much as an archive as a museum, something made clear by the prominence of its library, and its commitment to displaying forgotten and overlooked artists.

It is also a very uplifting space to spend time in. The Divan Bistro has tables inside and out, and the museum has the best art bookshop in the city.

Arter
Irmak Cad 13, Dolapdere
Tues–Sun 11–7,
Thurs 11–8, first Sat of the month 11–12
Metro: Osmanbey or Taksim, then a 15-minute walk.
Shuttle services to and from Pera Museum and Taksim metro (Gezi Park exit)
+90 212 708 5800
arter.org.tr

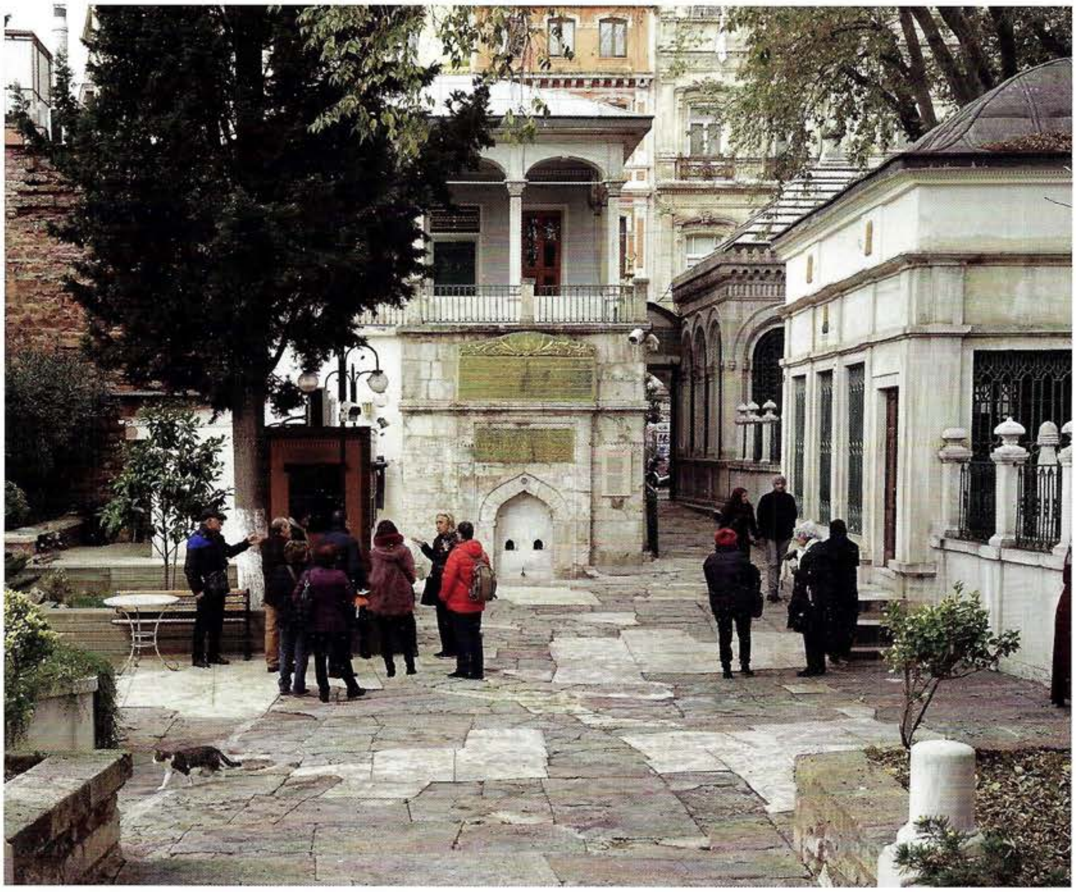




CLIVE CROOK

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Space odyssey
Arter's ingenious architecture allows the visitor to peer through internal windows and atriums from one gallery to another
Left *Interstices, a dizzying array of combinations* (2018), Barış Doğrusöz's wall-mounted geometric sculptures complement the Escher-like stairs in the main atrium
Above from top The building's tessellated façade and a taxidermied pelican from *Beyazımtırak* (*Whitish*), Ayşe Erkmen's retrospective



Tünel

24 Galata Mevlevi Lodge Museum

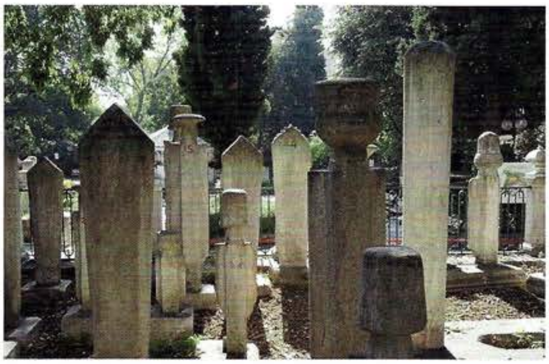
Quite apart from its elegantly presented content and stunning octagonal ceremonial hall (*semahane*), the garden of this former dervish lodge is one of Galata's best-kept secrets, a tranquil pool at the top of the cascade of grot shops that is Galip Dede Caddesi. It is worth the modest 14-lira entrance fee just to sit on a bench under the ancient huckleberry trees and marvel at being in the heart of the city.

This was Istanbul's first dervish lodge, built in 1491. Closed in 1925 and converted into a school, it is now a curiosity where you can see dervishes whirl on Sunday evenings through a forest of tourists' phones.

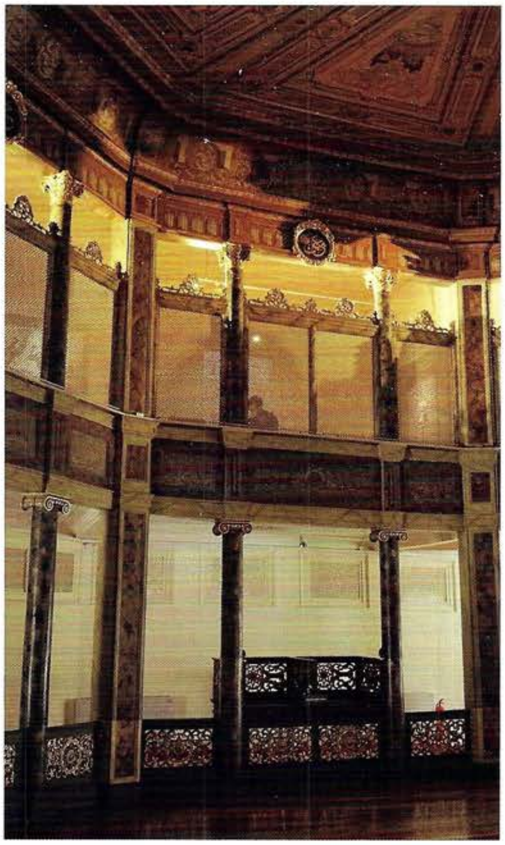
The exhibits and Sufism are clearly explained in English, and the Mevlevi order is brought to life with turbans, musical instruments and – our favourite – a board with a small metal peg in it, used to train dervishes to whirl.

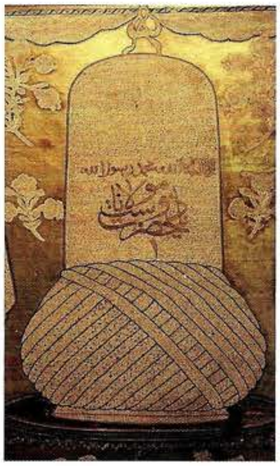
Upstairs are precious 16th-century volumes of Divan verse, the elaborate court poetry which would culminate in the 18th century in the verse of the celebrated Sufi poet Galip Dede. Don't miss his tomb at the entrance to the courtyard. The street is named after him and his verses form the leitmotif of the Aynalıkavak Kasrı, Selim III's pavilion on the Golden Horn (p120).

Galata Mevlevihanesi
Galip Dede Cad 15, Tünel
April–Sep 9–7,
Oct–Mar 9–5, closed Mon
Ritual dervish whirling ('sema') on Sundays at 5: tickets available from the museum the day before
Metro: Şişhane or Tünel
+90 212 245 4141
muze.gov.tr (look for 'Galata')

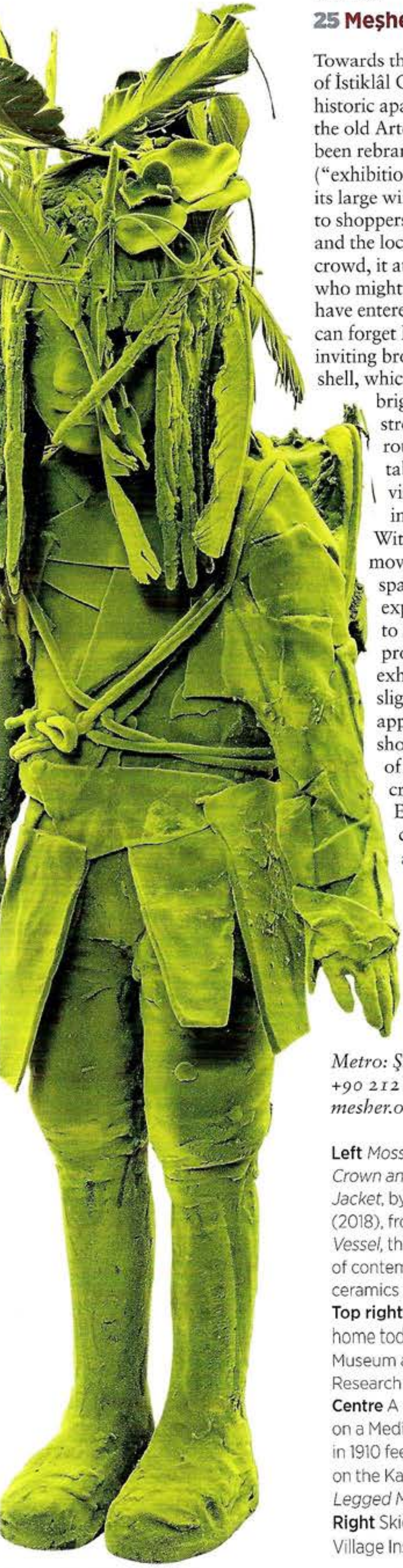


PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ





Top The courtyard of the Mevlevi Lodge. On the right is the tomb of the revered Mevlevi poet and sheikh Galip Dede (1757–99)
Above Headstones in the cemetery are crowned with dervish headgear
Right The Word of Unity prayer (*Talimat Al Tawhid*), written in 1833 in minute Tuluth and Ghubari scripts ('as fine as specks of dust') by the dervish calligrapher Hüseyin of Eyüp, hangs on a wall in the lodge
Far right The octagonal ceremonial hall



Tünel

25 Meşher

Towards the quieter end of İstiklâl Caddesi, in a historic apartment block, the old Arter has recently been rebranded as Meşher ("exhibition space"). Using its large window as a lure to shoppers, office workers and the local after-school crowd, it attracts visitors who might not otherwise have entered a gallery. Who can forget Marc Quinn's inviting bronze conch shell, which for months brightened up the street? Or the round ping-pong table at which visitors were invited to play? With Arter now moved to a far larger space in Dolapdere, expect Meşher to host thought-provoking exhibitions with slightly broader appeal. Its inaugural show – a selection of ingenious figural creations by European ceramicists – set a new bar for accessible contemporary art in the city.

Meşher *İstiklâl Cad 211, Beyoğlu*
Tues–Sun 11–7 (Fri 11–8)
Metro: Şişhane or Tünel
+90 212 708 5900
mesher.org

Tepebaşı

26 Istanbul Research Institute

In a 19th-century building by the Italian architect Guglielmo Semprini, the sister institute of the Pera Museum houses a superb collection of books and photographs, and stages in-depth documentary exhibitions on everything from street dogs to forgotten architects. As well as its exhibition gallery, there are sections devoted to Atatürk and the Republic, and Ottoman and Byzantine studies.

İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü *Meşrutiyet Cad 47, Tepebaşı*
Mon–Fri 9–5.30 (Wed 9–8), Sat 10.30–5
+90 212 334 0900
iae.org.tr, bilgi@iae.org.tr

ISTANBUL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Left *Moss Boy with Feather Crown and Fashionable Jacket*, by Kim Simonsson (2018), from *Beyond the Vessel*, the inaugural show of contemporary European ceramics at Meşher
Top right Tepebaşı, c1900, home today to the Pera Museum and the Istanbul Research Institute
Centre A European traveller on a Mediterranean cruise in 1910 feeding street dogs on the Karaköy wharf (*Four Legged Municipality*, 2016)
Right Skiers from Cilavuz Village Institute, Kars, 1941

Galatasaray

27 Galatasaray Museum

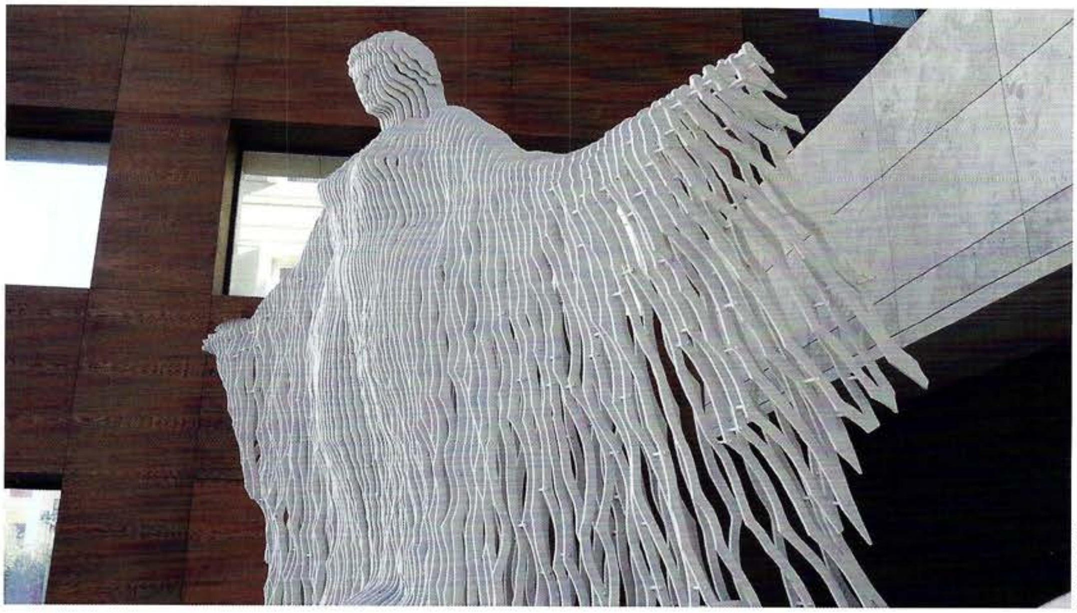
A handsome former post office opposite Galatasaray Lycée houses a museum of two halves. The upper floor tells the story of the famous football club, displaying its first cup, won in 1909, and photographs including one of Sabri Mahir (the first Turkish footballer to play overseas); team shots interesting mainly for the Greek and Balkan names, typical of Constantinople; and the trunks and cotton swimming cap of long-distance swimmer Ersin Aydın (born 1947).

The lower floor tells the story of the school, in splendidly renovated rooms. Merit certificates ("*bon point*" and "*double bon point*") are shown next to old velvet uniforms and photographs of the *davulcu* (drummer) who gave 40 years' service to the dormitories with his drum. Here, too, is the cup used by Mustafa Kemal on a visit, in 1932, with coffee grains still in it. The 1968 visit of Charles de Gaulle for the school's centenary is also documented, but it seems his drinking vessel was not preserved.

MONICA FRITZ

Galatasaray Üniversitesi Kültür ve Sanat Merkezi
İstiklâl Cad 90, Beyoğlu
Tues–Sun 10–6
Metro: Şişhane or Taksim
+90 212 293 49 86

Above Built in 1875 as a house, when the Armenian owner lived above a pharmacy, this building was Beyoğlu's post office from 1907 to 1997. It is now the Galatasaray Museum



MONICA FRITZ

Galatasaray

28 Yapı Kredi Cultural Centre

A timeless meeting point for friends and lovers, the square in front of the Galatasaray Lycée deserved better than the closed rationalist façade on its corner until 2017. Designed by one of Hitler's architects, Paul Schmitthenner, the former bank building pairs an eye-catching glass front with İlhan Koman's iconic open-armed sculpture *Akdeniz* (*Mediterranean*). Though smaller than it looks, the museum has proved its worth with excellent exhibitions championing writers little known outside Turkey. Also featured are selections from the bank's collections of antiques and antiquities, including coins, prayer beads and embroidery.

YAPI KREDI CULTURAL CENTRE

Above *Mediterranean* by İlhan Koman (1980), a huge open-armed woman made of steel strips, upstairs at the Yapı Kredi Cultural Centre
Left The author Özdemir Asaf buried in sand, one of the art centre's intimate portraits of literary figures

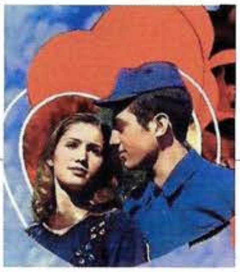
Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat
İstiklâl Cad 161, Beyoğlu
Mon-Fri 10–6.45,
Sat 11–6.45, Sun 1–6.45
+90 212 252 4700
sanat.ykykultur.com.tr

Galatasaray

29 SALT Beyoğlu

Expect superb shows in SALT's Beyoğlu branch, a palazzo with three floors of gallery space, a walk-in art cinema and English-language bookshop. The latest show is *Our Blissful Souvenirs* by the ultra-realist painter Nur Koçak.

SALT Beyoğlu
İstiklâl Cad 136, Beyoğlu
Tues–Sat 12–8, Sun 12–6
+90 212 377 4200
saltonline.org/en/home

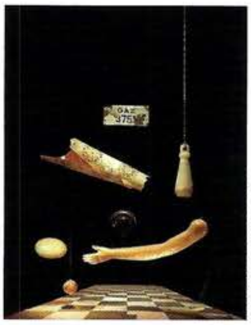


Çukurcuma

30 Museum of Innocence

In a city as venerable as Istanbul, it is perhaps not surprising that so few museums document a period as recent as this one does. Part companion to Orhan Pamuk's eponymous novel, part homage to everyday life in the late 1970s of the author's youth, the museum – which survived a fire in December – guides visitors through a series of evocative vignettes curated from minor objects too old to be rubbish and too young to be antiques. Pamuk's obsessive tendencies are deployed to good effect: the exhibition begins with 4,213 cigarette butts pinned like insects on a wall, lovingly annotated with memories such as "while eating köfte in Huzur Lokantası", and continues with similar ingenuity and attention to detail.

For an authentic souvenir, skip the gift shop and take the short walk up the hill to the antique shops of Çukurcuma, where Pamuk is said to have bought most of the exhibits.



MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE

Above right *Empty House*, from the Museum of Innocence
Left Detail of *Postcard*, by Nur Koçak, at SALT Beyoğlu

Masumiyet Müzesi
Dalgıç Çıkmazı 2,
Firuzağa, Beyoğlu
Tues–Sun 10–6
(Thurs 10–8)
Tram: Tophane
Metro: Şişhane or Taksim
+90 212 252 9738
en.masumiyetmuzesi.org

Galatasaray

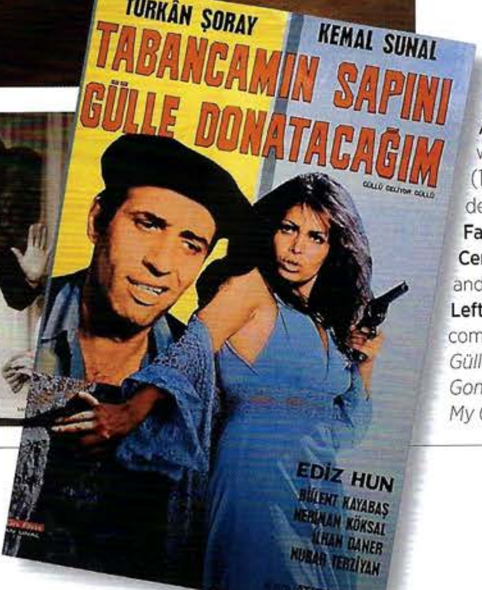
31 TÜRVAK Film and Theatre Museum

The TÜRVAK Museum, on four floors of a building just below the Galatasaray Lycée, is more of a homage to one man, Türker İnanoğlu, the father of Turkish cinema, than a museum.

One needs some knowledge of Turkish cinema – and the Turkish language – to get much out of it, which is a shame for the average visitor. Fans of Beyoğlu history, however, will love the programmes for shows at the Théâtre Municipal des Petits-Champs nearby from 1904, advertising acts such as the comic singer Polin, "*le grand succès de rire et le premier chanteur de Paris*", while anyone interested in movie iconography will be thrilled by the huge collection of hand-painted, lithographed film posters.

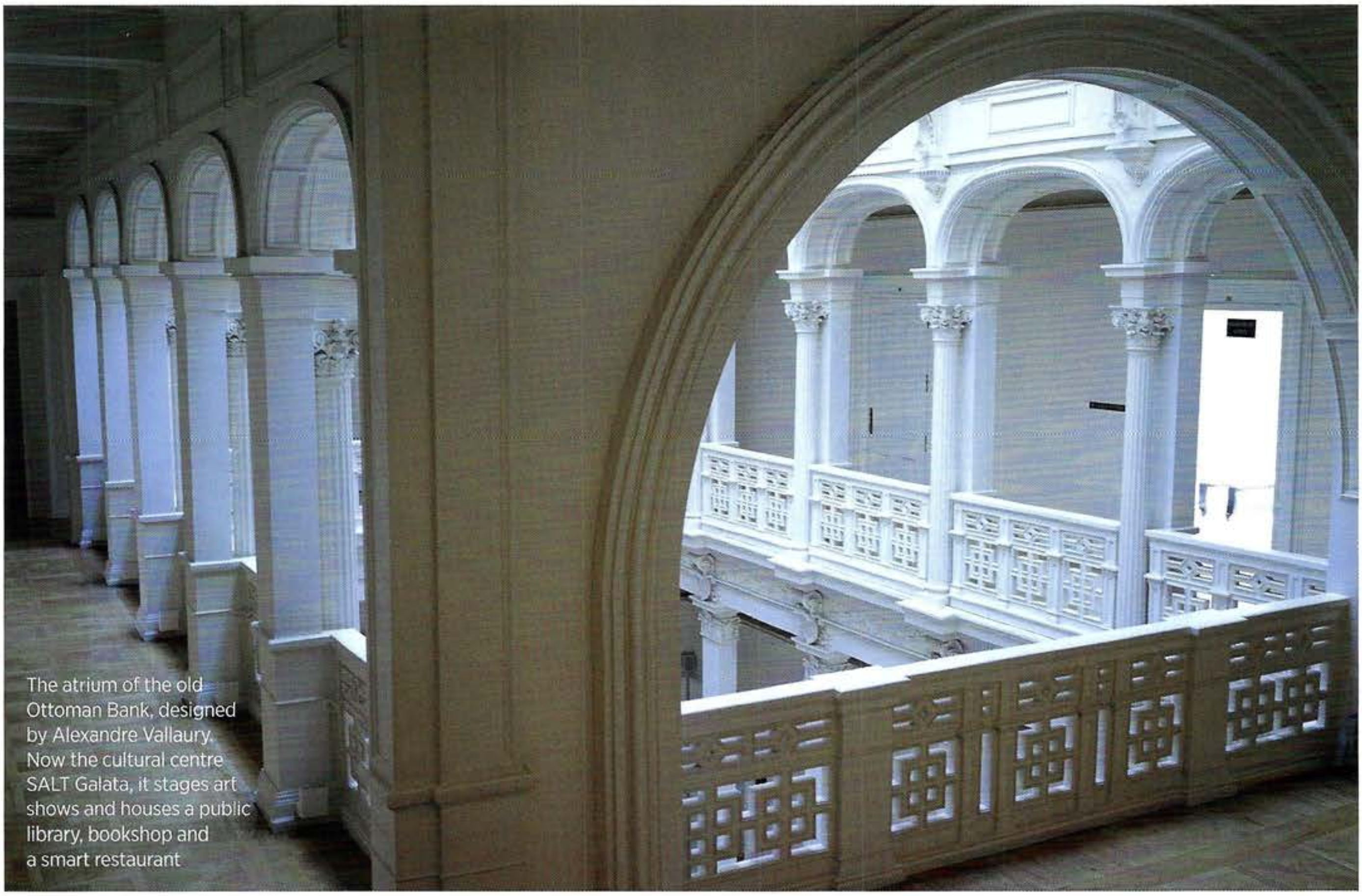
In other rooms there are huge film-cutting tables, stills and scripts from Turkish soap operas, and more photographs. The café downstairs could be a good place to ponder why the gift shop doesn't sell facsimiles of the wonderful film posters the museum displays.

TÜRVAK
Sinema-Tiyatro Müzesi
Yeniçarşı Cad 24, Galatasaray
Tues–Sun 10–6
Metro: Taksim or Şişhane
+90 212 245 8091
turvak.com

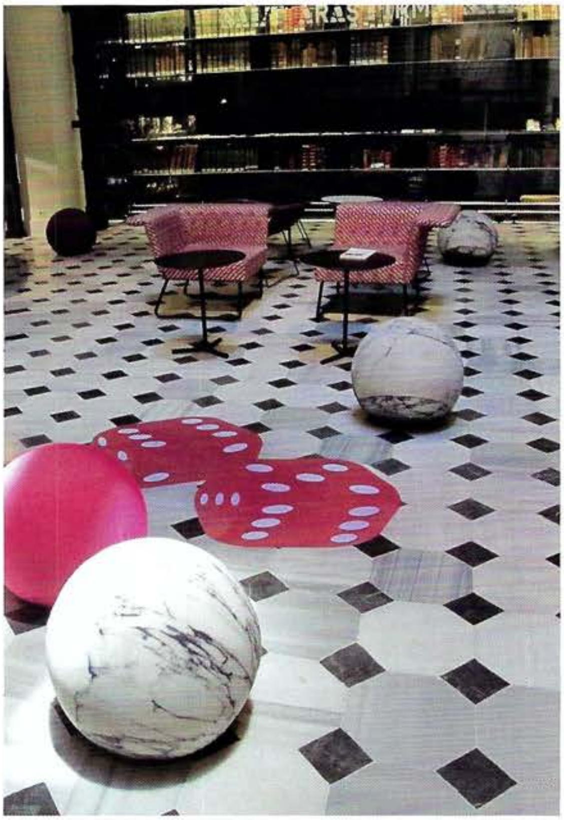


Above Actress and art writer Neyyire Neyir (1902–43) made her film debut in 1923
Far left The hall of fame
Centre left Şadiye Arcıman and Fatma Andaç on stage
Left A poster for the 1980 comedy *Tabancamın Sapını Gülle Donatacağım (I'm Gonna Decorate the Butt of My Gun with Roses)*

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ



The atrium of the old Ottoman Bank, designed by Alexandre Vallaury. Now the cultural centre SALT Galata, it stages art shows and houses a public library, bookshop and a smart restaurant



Karaköy

32 SALT Galata

The cultural institution SALT was founded by Garanti Bank, which in 1996 bought the remains and archives of the former Ottoman Bank and set up home at its splendid 1890s HQ, a short walk up from Karaköy. The library has over two million digitised items, on subjects from art to social studies. Digital exhibitions about the building's banking past are scattered throughout, along with somewhat challenging shows about the state of the world.

SALT Galata
Bankalar Cad 11, Karaköy
Tues–Sat 12–8, Sun 12–6
Tram: Karaköy or Şişhane
+90 212 334 2200
saltonline.org

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Şişhane

33 Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews

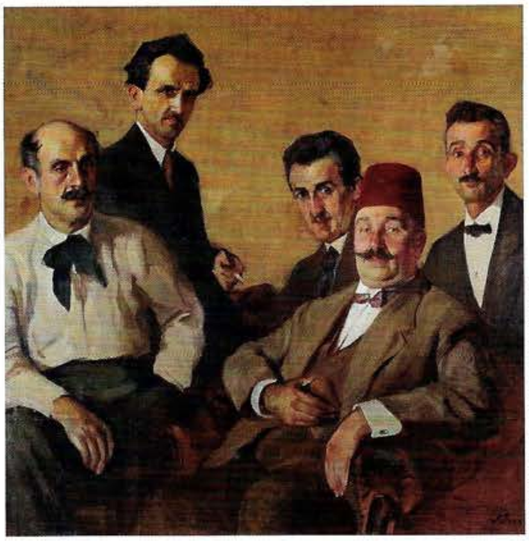
The Jewish Museum has moved from Karaköy to Şişhane's Neve Shalom Synagogue.

Panels explain how German Jews fled Nazi Germany for Turkey. A letter from Albert Einstein to "The President of the Turkish Republic" asks for "forty professors and doctors from Germany" to be allowed to "continue their scientific and medical work in Turkey". Other exhibits cover the role of Turkish Jews in public life. Objects include decorative Torah cases from Urfa and Antakya, known as *tiks*.

There are sections on the Jewish press in the Levant and the history of the extinct Camondo banking family, the "Rothschilds of the East". For the funeral of the patriarch Abraham Salomon Camondo in 1873, financial institutions and the merchants of Galata and the Golden Horn took the day off.

500. (Beşyüzüncü) Yıl Vakfı Türk Musevileri Müzesi
Neve Shalom Synagogue, Büyük Hendek Cad 61, Şişhane
Mon–Thurs, Sun 10–5, Fri 10–1, closed Sat
Metro: Şişhane or Tünel
+90 212 292 6333/34
muze500.com

Below Medicine bottle used in the circumcision ceremony


MSGSÜ İSTANBUL RESIM VE HEYKEL MÜZESI

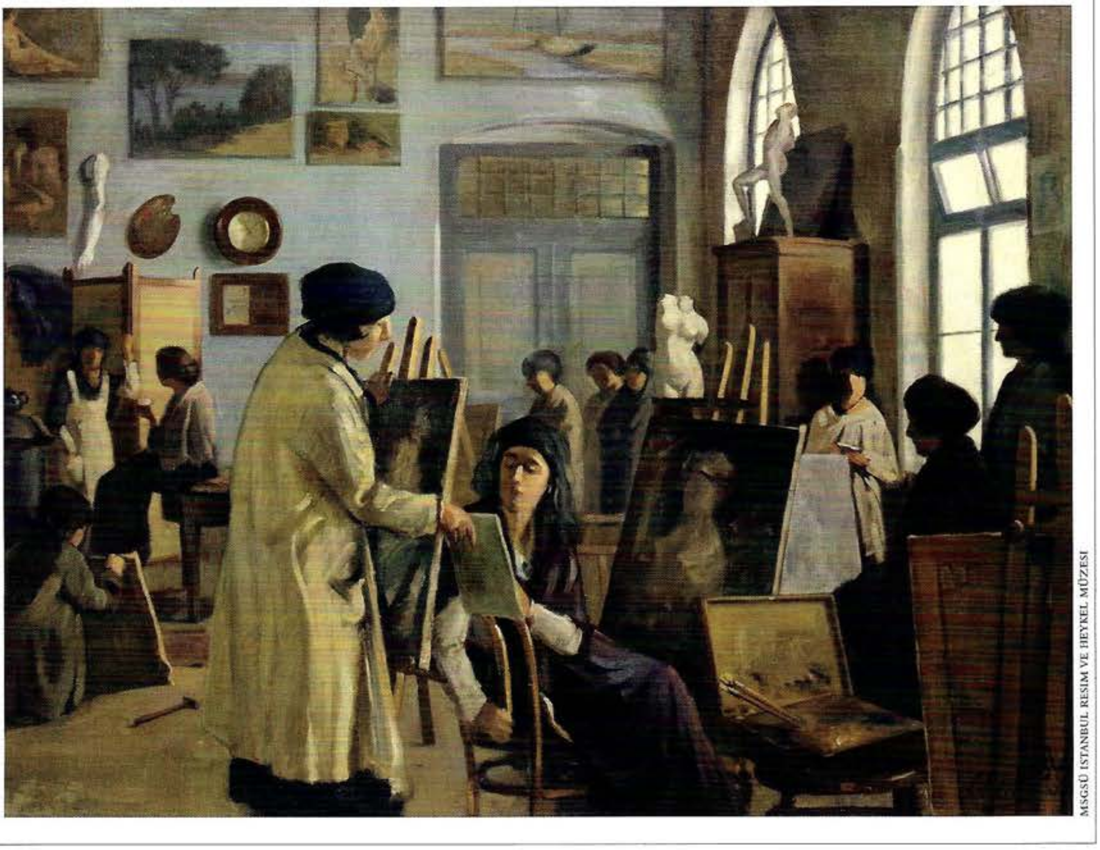
Tophane

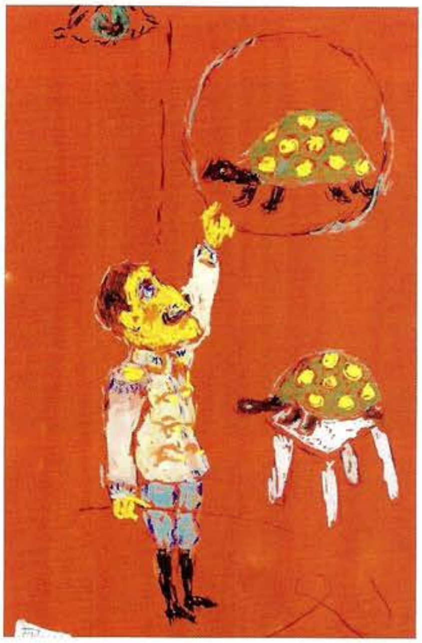
34 Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture

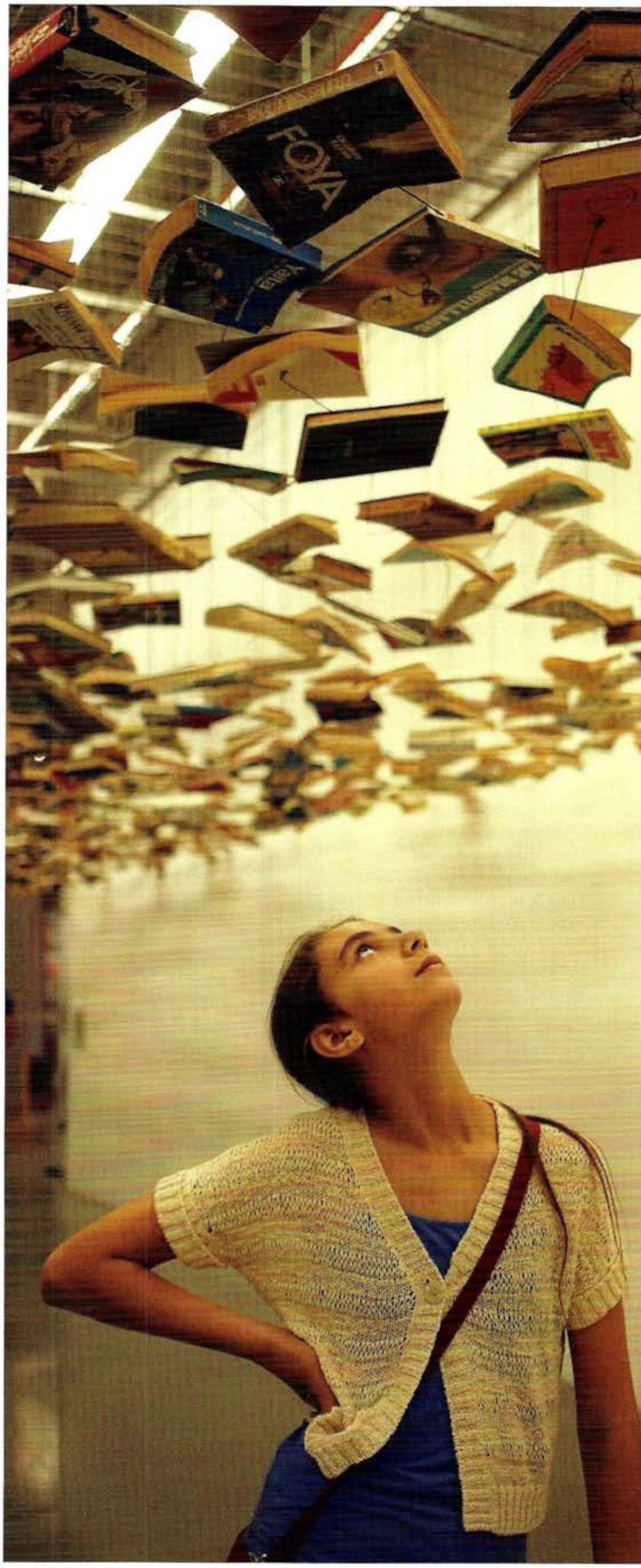
A former shipping warehouse eight years in redevelopment reopened in time to provide a third venue for the 2019 Biennial. The waterfront building will now make a 17,700 sq m home for the painting and sculpture collections of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Whether or not it would have been more visionary to raze it, so the dome and pencil-thin minarets of the Nusretiye Mosque could be seen from the sea, it will be worth a visit for iconic paintings of early-20th-century Istanbul, many not seen for two decades.

Istanbul Resim Heykel Müzesi *Meclis-i Mebusan Cad 6 (Antrepo 5), Tophane*
Scheduled to open late 2020
Tram: Tophane
irhm.msgsu.edu.tr

Left *The Painters' Group* by Feyhaman Duran, 1921. From left, Sami Yetik, İbrahim Çallı, Duran, Şevket Dağ (in the fez) and Hikmet Onat
Below, left and right The new Museum of Painting and Sculpture during the Biennial
Bottom *The Women's Studio* by Ömer Adil Bey, 1919–22


MSGSÜ İSTANBUL RESIM VE HEYKEL MÜZESI





Şişhane

35 Istanbul Modern

When Istanbul's first museum of modern art opened in 2004, in a former customs warehouse in Karaköy, it provided a hub for the Biennial and proved a catalyst for an explosion of private galleries in a boom decade for modern art. In 2018 it moved to the historic Union Française building on Meşrutiyet Caddesi, pending the completion of new premises by Renzo Piano on the site of its original home, due to open in 2021. The Eczacıbaşı Group founded the gallery with its own collection. In the past ten years it has built an important photography collection, ranging from the Ottoman era to the present.

Istanbul Modern
Meşrutiyet Cad 99, Beyoğlu
Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat 10–6,
Thurs 10–8, Sun 11–6
Metro: Şişhane
+90 212 334 7300
istanbulmodern.org

Top The former Union Française, temporary home of Istanbul Modern
Right *False Ceiling*, by Richard Wentworth, 2005, was an icon of Istanbul Modern when it opened in a warehouse in Karaköy
Above left The current display includes *Circus in Red: The Tortoise Trainer*, by Fikret Mualla (1903–67)
Left Zhan Wang's stainless steel *Artificial Rock* (2007)

Dolapdere

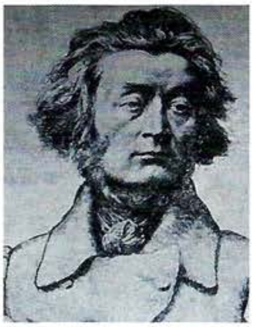
36 Adam Mickiewicz Museum

This museum in a corner of Dolapdere, conveniently close to Arter, celebrates the Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz, "the Slavic bard". Enchanted by Istanbul, the Polish émigré frequently compared its streets to those of his native Nowogródek, which he had to abandon in his youth, having been first imprisoned then exiled for his part in the struggle for Polish independence. He spent his last few years in a house on this site, and died here of cholera in 1855.

In 1870 an enormous fire devoured much of Pera, including the house, but members of Istanbul's Polish community purchased the plot and erected a faithful copy of the building, which became a museum in 1955, the centenary of his death.

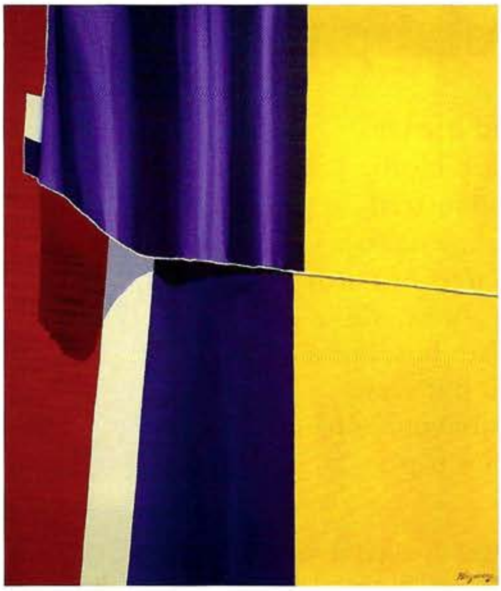
Exhibits here currently include a shadow-theatre version of Mickiewicz's ballad *Renegade*, and a reconstruction of the Ottoman tent he used in a military camp in Burgas, in modern-day Bulgaria.

Adam Mickiewicz Müzesi
Tatlı Badem Cad 10,
Dolapdere
Tues–Sat 9–4.30
Metro: Taksim, then a 10-minute walk
+90 212 237 2545



Above Poland's Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz was one of the leading figures of Polish independence. He moved to Istanbul to organise Polish forces to fight Russia in the Crimean War and died of cholera in Beyoğlu in 1855

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ



Tepebaşı

37 Atatürk Museum Room at the Pera Palace Hotel

The Pera Palace opened in 1896, greeting travellers off the Orient Express to a *fin-de-siècle* spectacle of porphyry and marble. No surprise, then, that Agatha Christie wrote her tale of that train's famous murder in room 411 while accompanying her archaeologist husband to the Near East. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk first stayed at the hotel in 1917; room 101 is open in his honour, with a display of his effects that preserves a sense of Turkey's founder.

Pera Palace Hotel
Meşrutiyet Cad 52,
Tepebaşı
Daily 10–11, 3–4
+90 212 377 4000
perapalace.com

Top *Clean & Bright* (1970), from Burhan Doğançay's *General Urban Walls* series

Above right A place for intrigue: Mata Hari, Ernest Hemingway and Greta Garbo were among the guests who drank at the famous bar in the Pera Palace

Right A Jeeves moment: the Gazi's linen suit and panama hat, worn at his Sea Pavilion in Florya (p160)

Tarlabaşı

38 Doğançay Museum

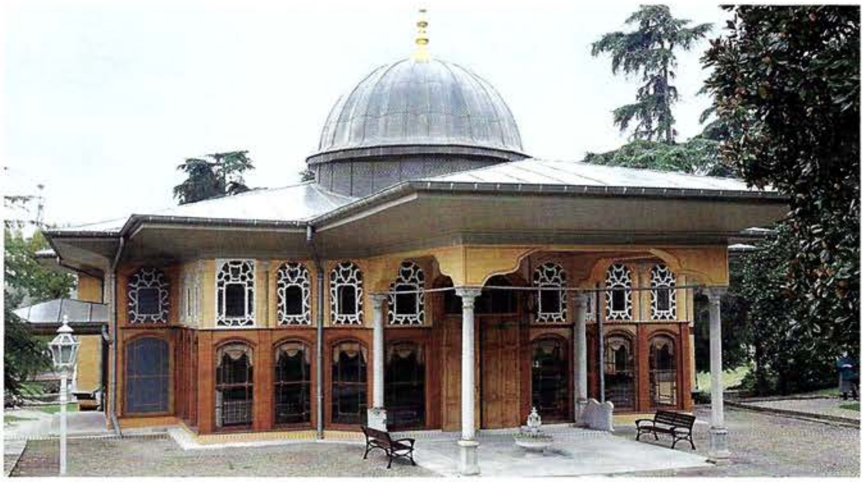
The Doğançay Museum looks like a Manhattan townhouse, complete with spiral fire escape on the front and prostitutes hanging around outside. Inside, the paintings of Burhan Doğançay, who died in 2013, fill four brightly lit floors of starkly clinical gallery space. Trained in Paris, Doğançay is a divisive figure in the Turkish art world, but his preoccupation with urban walls and their textures makes his work easily recognisable.

Balo Sokak 42, Beyoğlu
Tues–Sun 10–6
Metro: Taksim
+90 212 244 7770/71
www.dogancaymuseum.org

BILLUR TANSEL

Horn of revelations

Until recently, there had been no reason to visit the Golden Horn, birthplace of Turkey's industrial revolution, since the balmy days of picnics on the Sweet Waters of Europe in the late 19th century. Now, not only is it full of artists' studios, but there are three excellent but very different museums to lure you. You can visit all of them in one trip



Hasköy

39 Aynalıkavak Kasrı

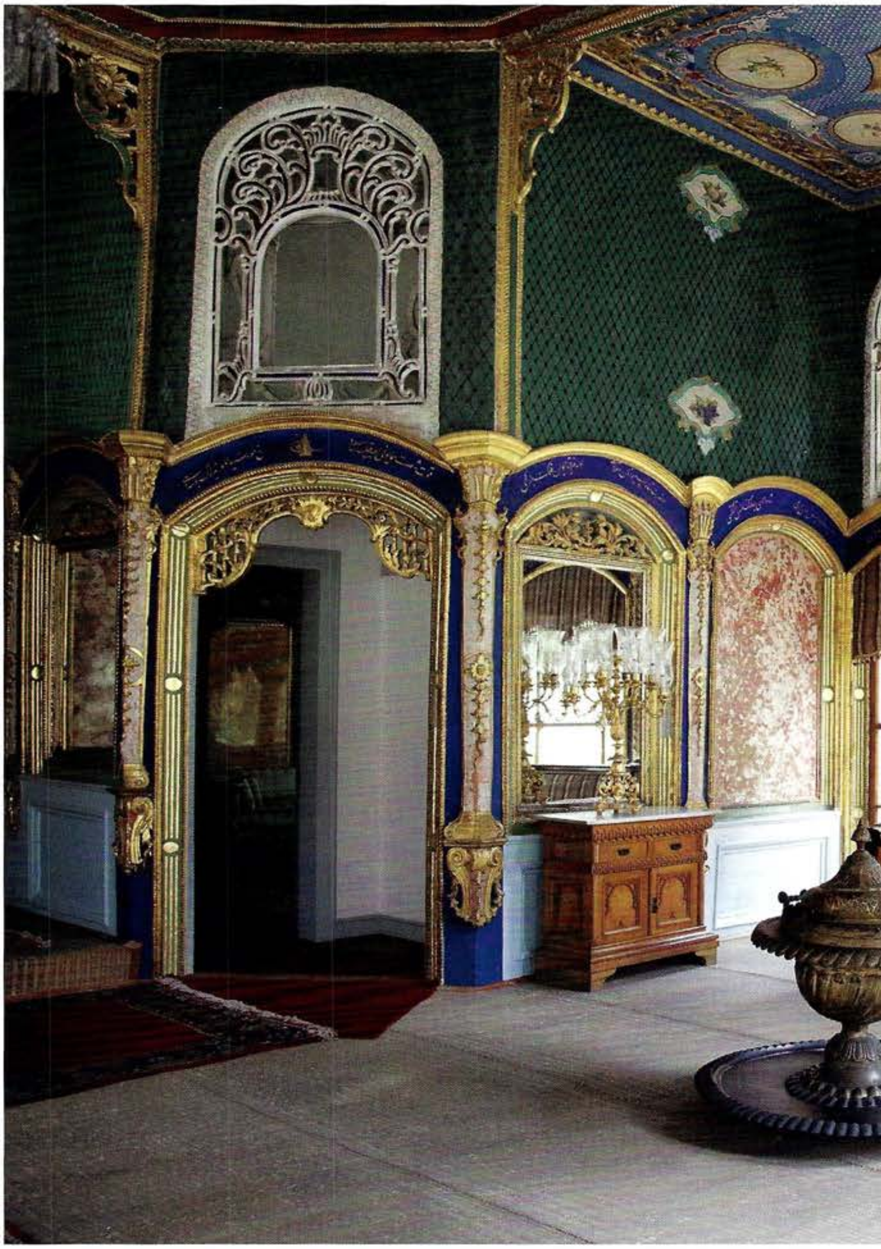
The Pavilion of the Mirrored Poplar, one of Istanbul's best-kept Ottoman secrets, enjoyed its heyday in the early 18th century. Aynalıkavak Kasrı was part of the Tershane Sarayı, the Dockyard Palace, where Mehmed the Conqueror built his fleet – a palace very much in the vein of the Topkapı, with clusters of pavilions dropping down to the shore.

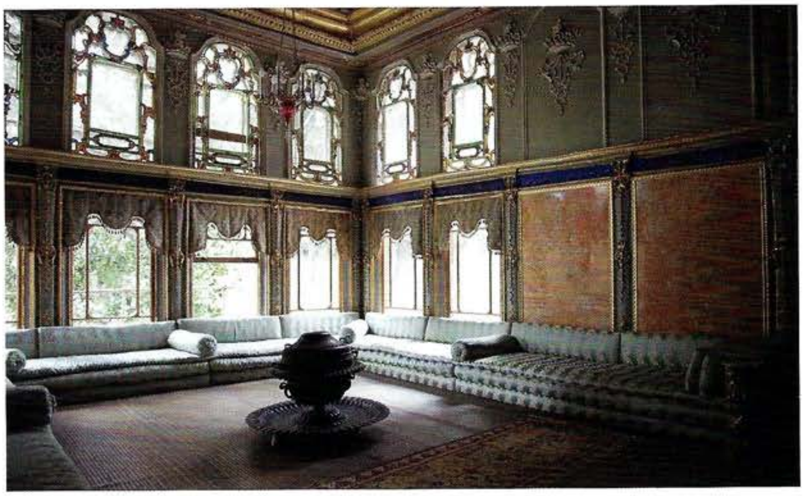
Inevitably, in time it was almost entirely swallowed up by industrial activity. Fortunately, in 1902 the naval dockyards authority rescued the last of the Tershane's pavilions and its greenhouse. The result is a wonderfully incongruous Ottoman pearl in a gritty industrial setting, but with high walls that shut out the world and give a sense of a secret garden. Its name is perhaps a reference to the shimmering leaves of long-lost poplars.

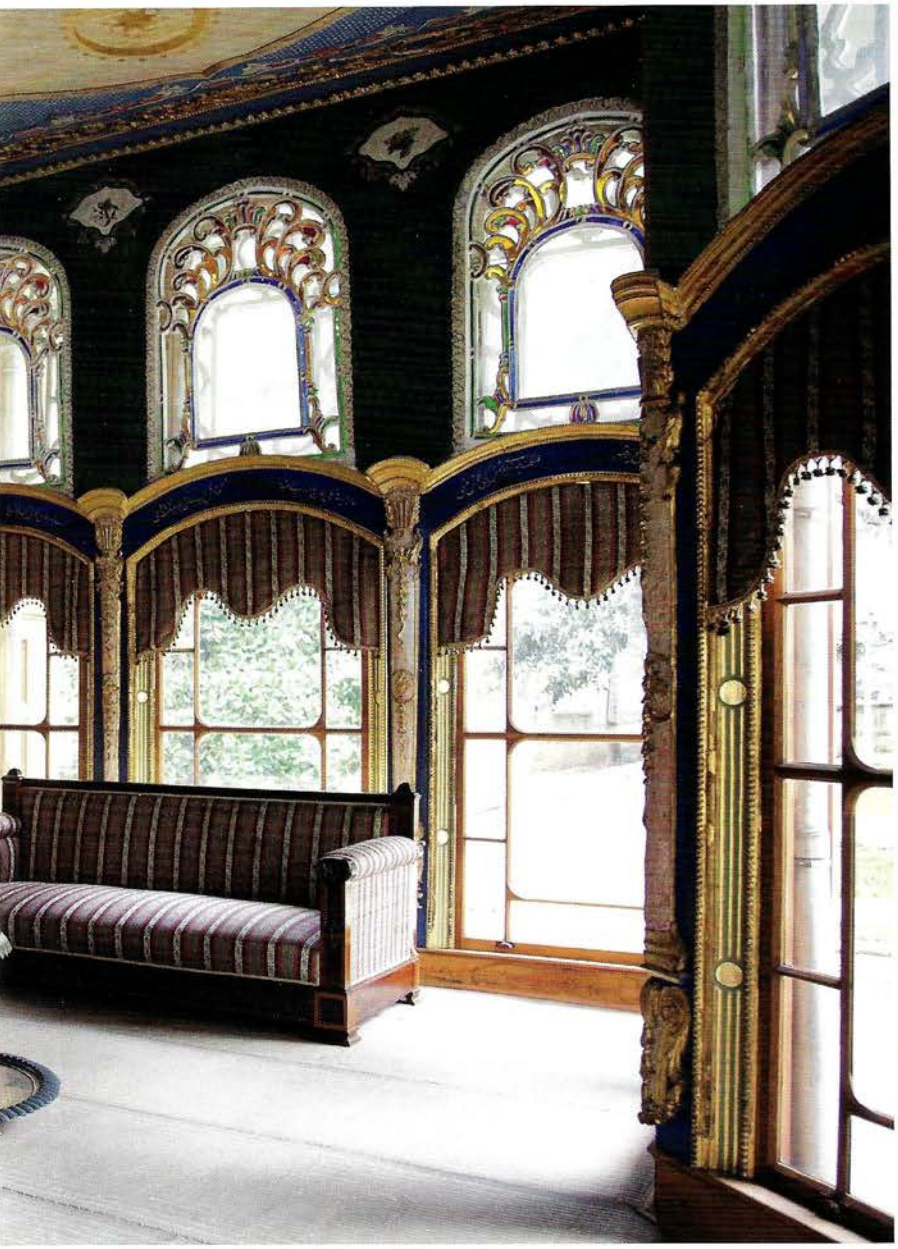
Aynalıkavak, all that remains of the palace, is forever associated with Selim III (1789–1807), a sultan who shut himself away in its music room to devise *makams* (modal variations) that are still part of the repertoire of classical Ottoman music.

There are very few visitors, but the trip is well worth it. It is perhaps the only building outside the Topkapı to conjure up the magic of the 18th-century Tulip Period. Even in Selim's time, the palace was something of an anachronism, for the Neoclassical revolution had already arrived in Turkey.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG







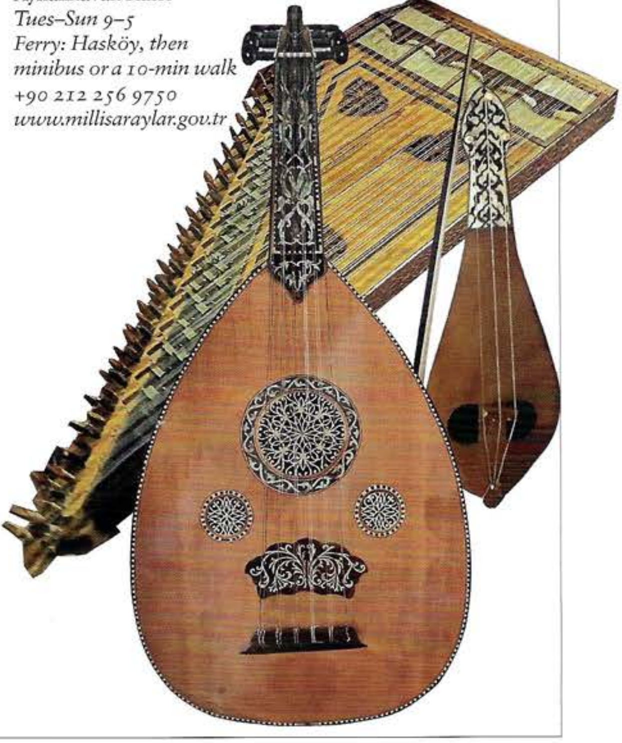
Aynalıkavak is gloriously Ottoman in inspiration, with low divans, exquisite friezes of calligraphy and tiers of windows that flood the rooms with light.

Change was in the air, and it affected music as well as design. For the first time Western instruments were being added to the repertoire. But downstairs is a museum devoted entirely to classical court instruments.

The pavilion is just within walking distance of the Rahmi M Koç Museum (overleaf), but buses and minibuses pass frequently.

Aynalıkavak Kasrı
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Hasköy, then minibus or a 10-min walk
+90 212 256 9750
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

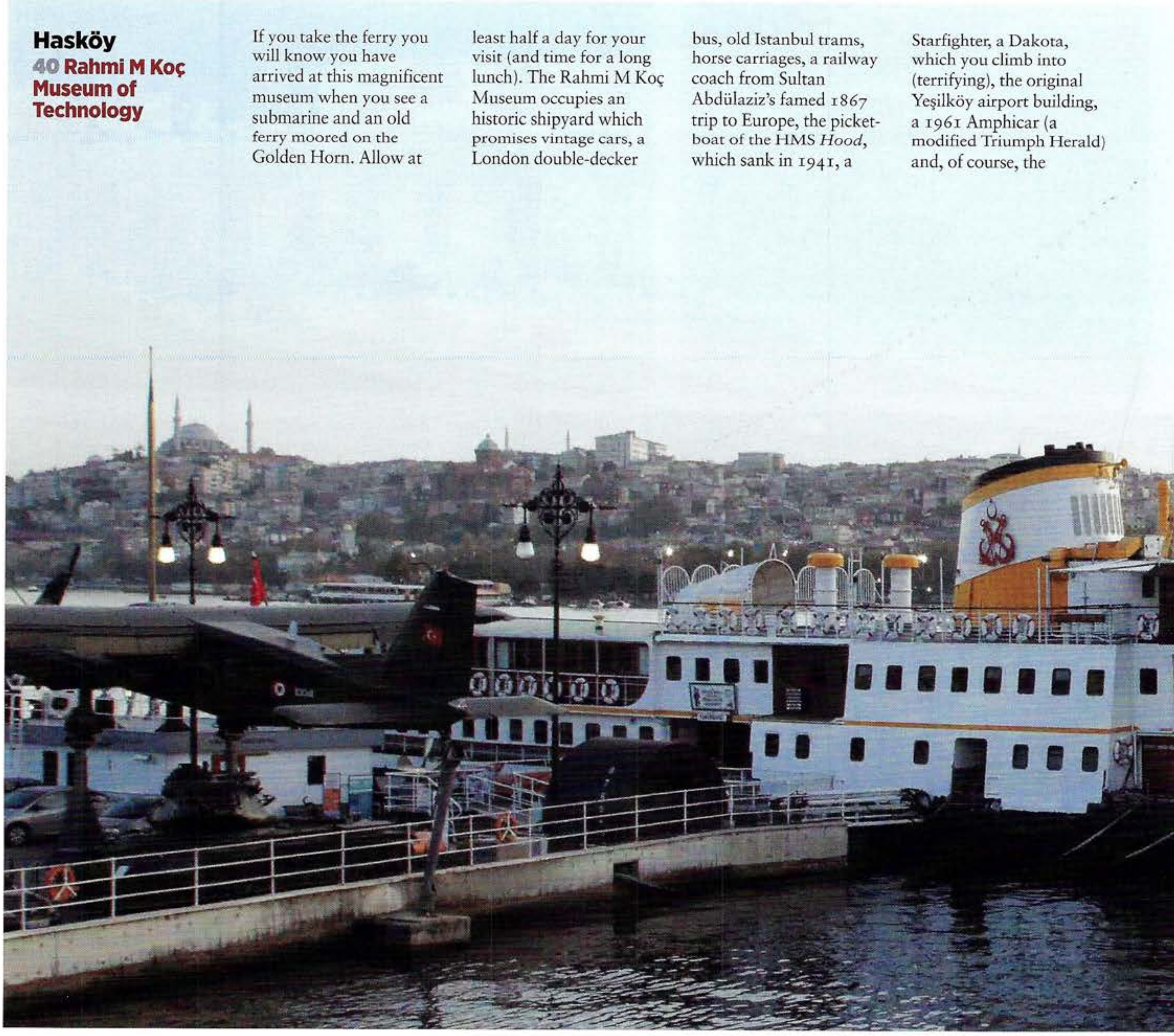
Opposite, top The pavilion of Aynalıkavak, with its broad-eaved portico
Left Immediately behind the portico lies the Council Chamber. The freestanding furniture was introduced in the 19th century
Above The Composition Room created for the highly musical Selim III in 1794
Above left His cipher appears in one of the elaborate ceilings
Far left, below A wheel-of-fortune window, full of Sufi symbolism, above the throne
Below 19th-century musical instruments – *kanun, ud* and *armudî kemençe* – from the pavilion's small collection



Hasköy

40 Rahmi M Koç Museum of Technology

If you take the ferry you will know you have arrived at this magnificent museum when you see a submarine and an old ferry moored on the Golden Horn. Allow at least half a day for your visit (and time for a long lunch). The Rahmi M Koç Museum occupies an historic shipyard which promises vintage cars, a London double-decker bus, old Istanbul trams, horse carriages, a railway coach from Sultan Abdülaziz's famed 1867 trip to Europe, the picket-boat of the HMS *Hood*, which sank in 1941, a Starfighter, a Dakota, which you climb into (terrifying), the original Yeşilköy airport building, a 1961 Amphicar (a modified Triumph Herald) and, of course, the

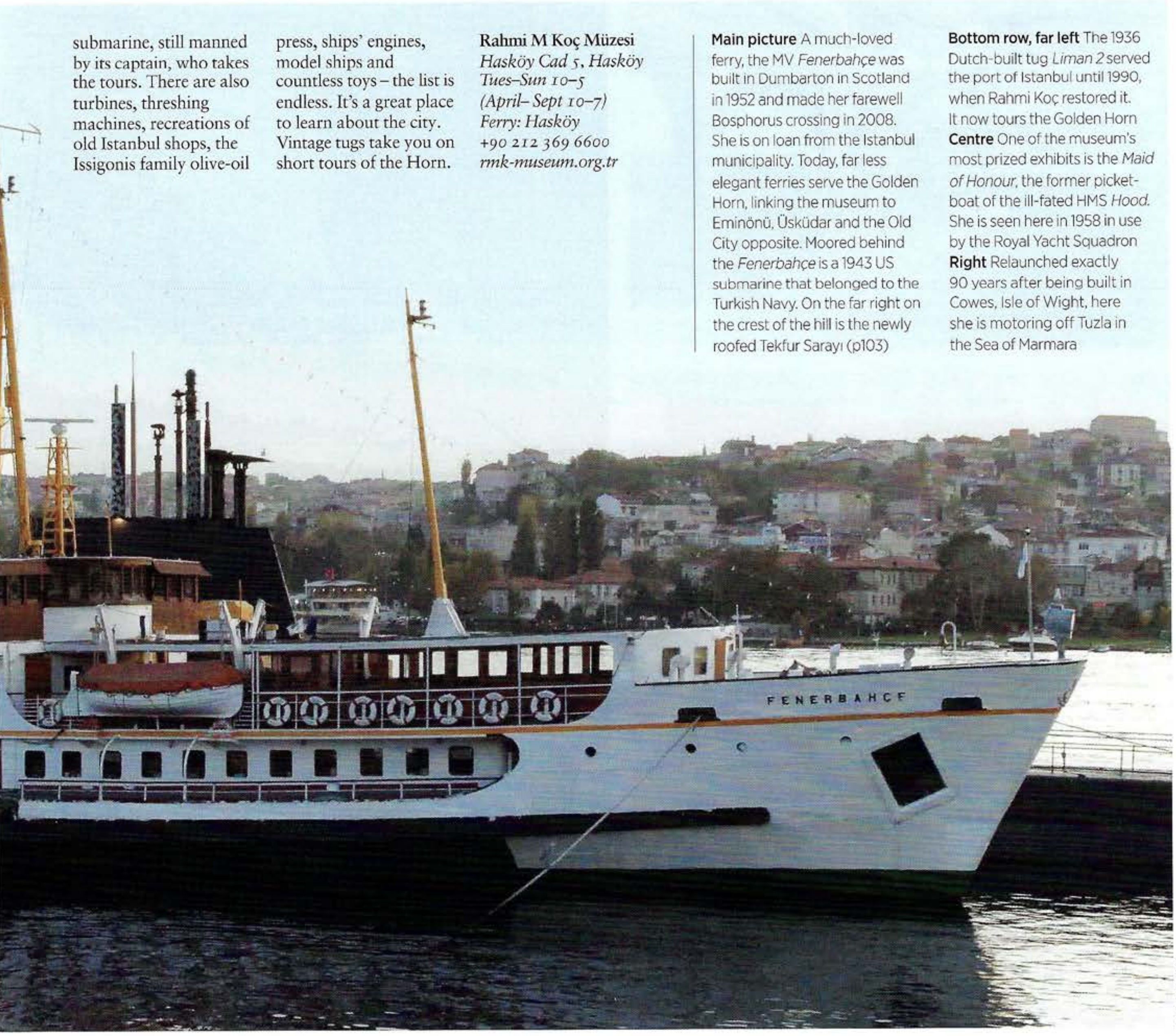


RMK MUSEUM

ROYAL YACHT SQUADRON, COWES

submarine, still manned by its captain, who takes the tours. There are also turbines, threshing machines, recreations of old Istanbul shops, the Issigonis family olive-oil press, ships' engines, model ships and countless toys – the list is endless. It's a great place to learn about the city. Vintage tugs take you on short tours of the Horn.

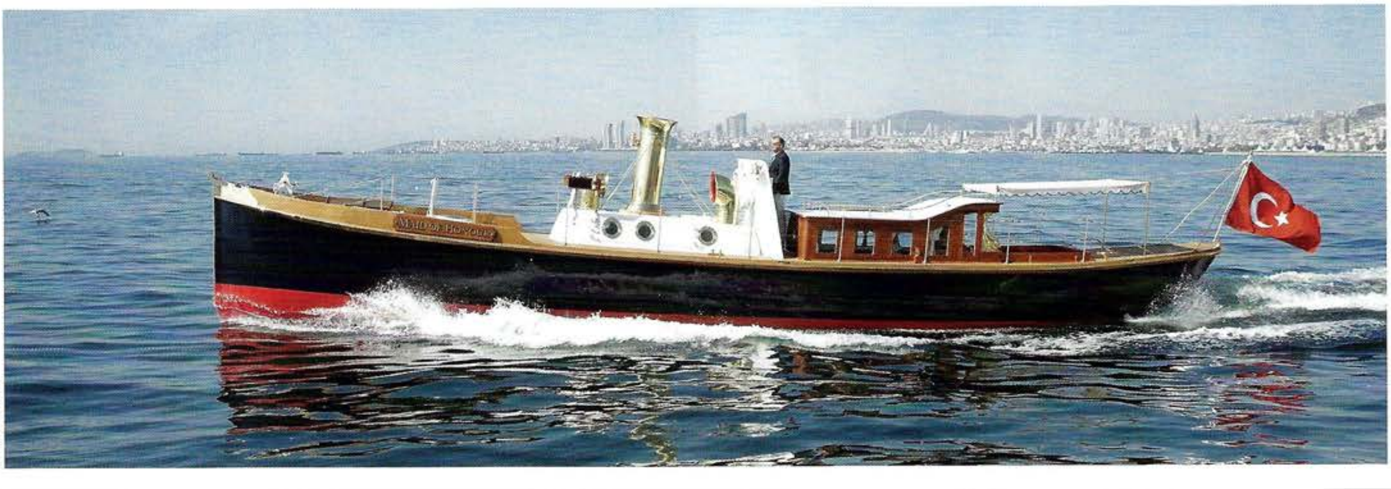
Rahmi M Koç Müzesi
Hasköy Cad 5, Hasköy
Tues–Sun 10–5
(April– Sept 10–7)
Ferry: Hasköy
+90 212 369 6600
rmk-museum.org.tr



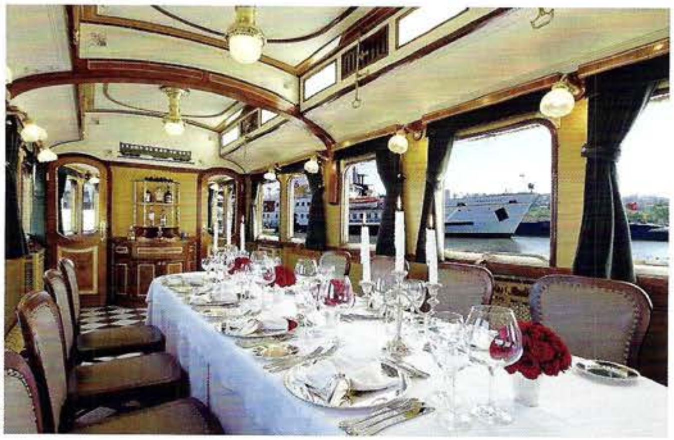
BRUNO CIANCI

Main picture A much-loved ferry, the MV *Fenerbahçe* was built in Dumbarton in Scotland in 1952 and made her farewell Bosphorus crossing in 2008. She is on loan from the Istanbul municipality. Today, far less elegant ferries serve the Golden Horn, linking the museum to Eminönü, Üsküdar and the Old City opposite. Moored behind the *Fenerbahçe* is a 1943 US submarine that belonged to the Turkish Navy. On the far right on the crest of the hill is the newly roofed Tekfur Sarayı (p103)

Bottom row, far left The 1936 Dutch-built tug *Liman 2* served the port of Istanbul until 1990, when Rahmi Koç restored it. It now tours the Golden Horn **Centre** One of the museum's most prized exhibits is the *Maid of Honour*, the former picket-boat of the ill-fated HMS *Hood*. She is seen here in 1958 in use by the Royal Yacht Squadron **Right** Relaunched exactly 90 years after being built in Cowes, Isle of Wight, here she is motoring off Tuzla in the Sea of Marmara

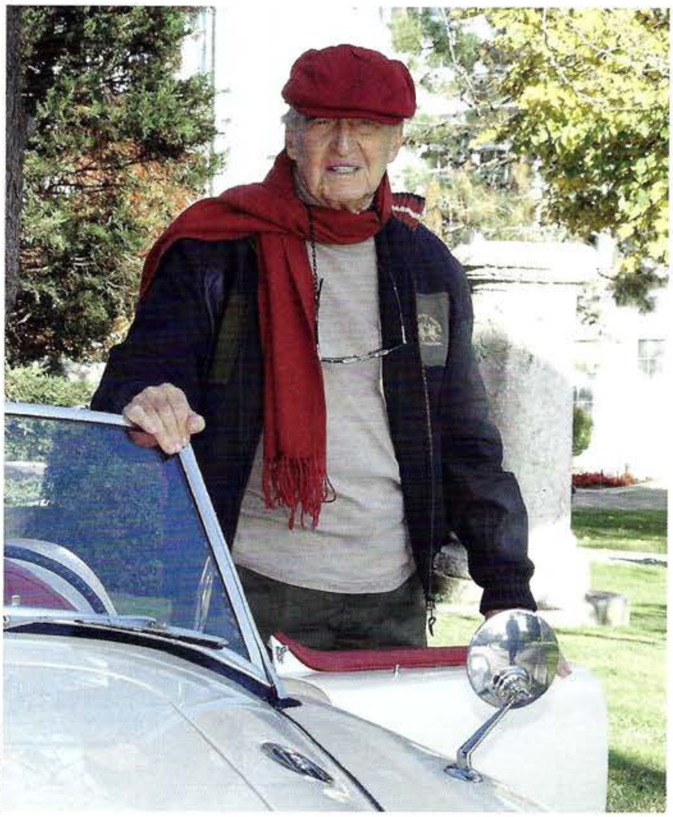


BRUNO CIANCI



COURTESY OF DIVAN

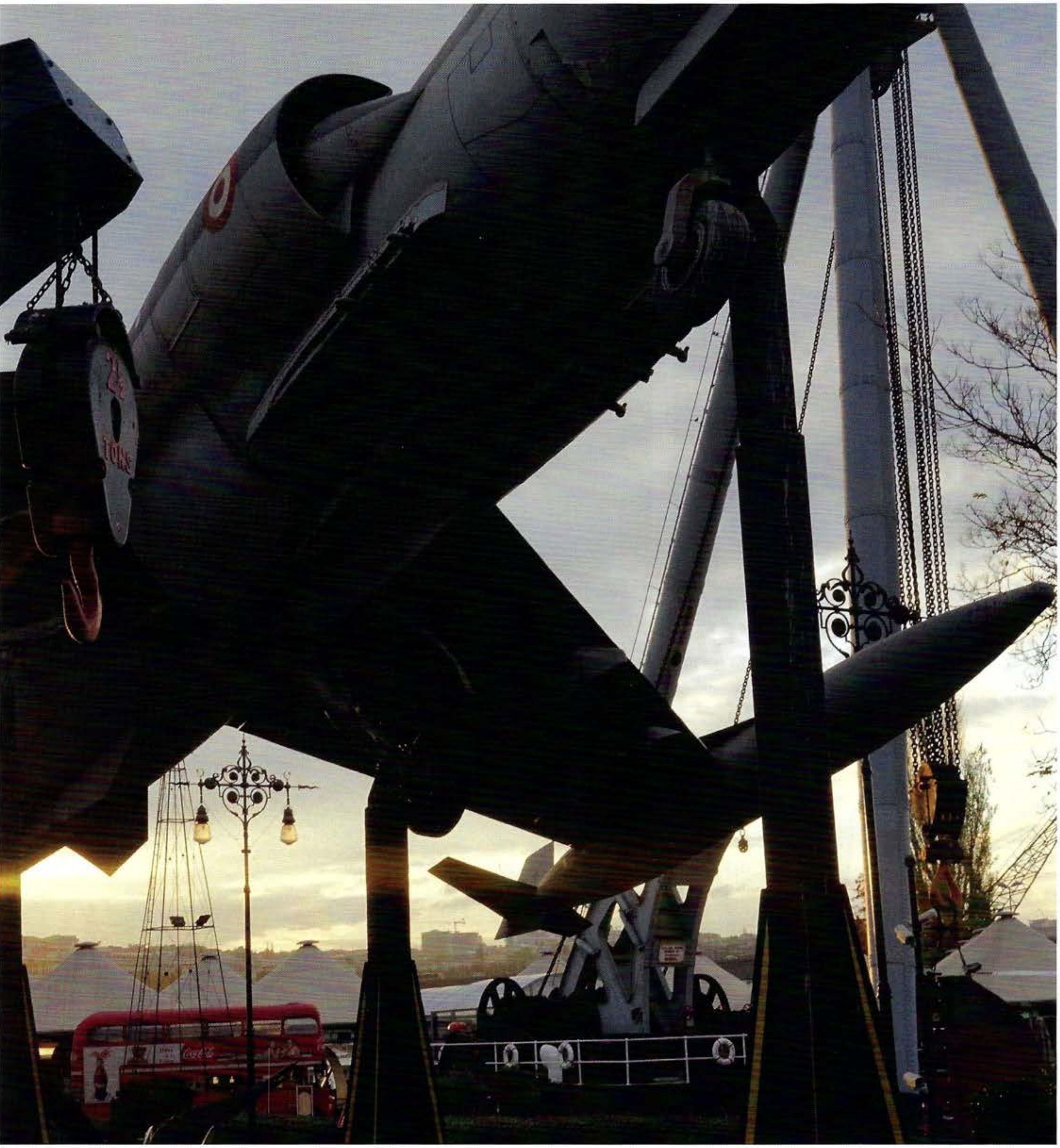
BRUNO CIANCI



BRUNO CIANCI

PHOTOGRAPHS: ALI KONYALI

Left Rahmi M Koç steps out of a 1955 MGA car, one of his latest acquisitions. He founded the museum in 1994, with a wealth of vehicles of every vintage **Top left** A dining table in a coach from the train that brought Kaiser Wilhelm II to Istanbul in 1917. Now bookable for lunch or dinner. The museum has no shortage of good food: with two stylish restaurants, Suzy's Café du Levant, a classic brasserie, and Halat by the water, which has spectacular views down



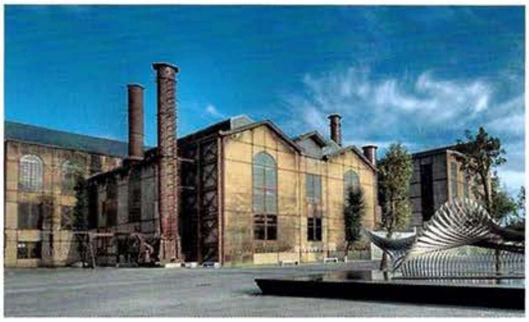
MONICA FRITZ

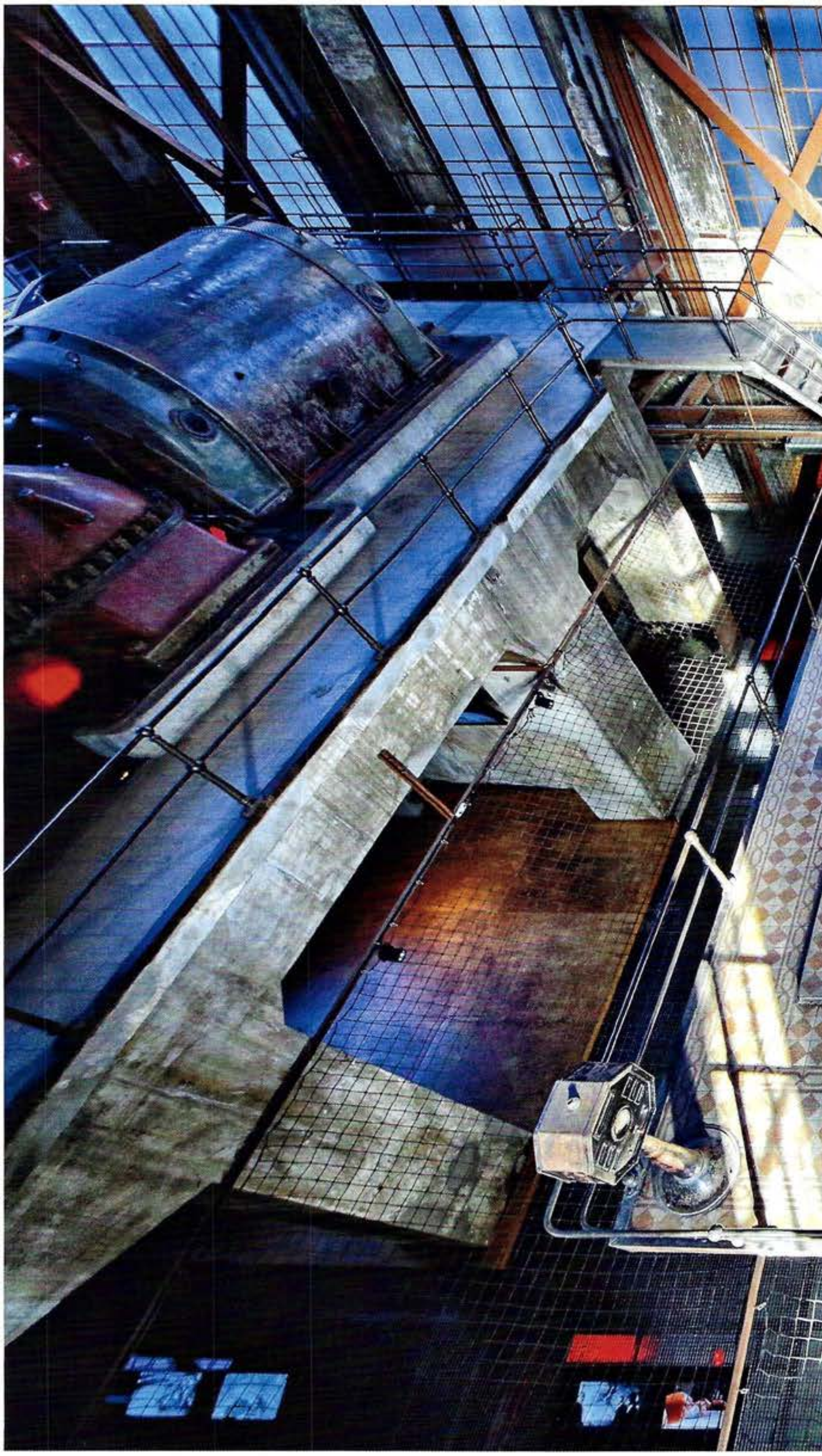
the Golden Horn to the Süleymaniye **Opposite centre** Elyesa Bazna, the World War II spy better known as 'Cicero', drove this 1943 Mercedes **Above** The Fiat-built 1974 F104 Starfighter served Turkey's Air Force for 20 years. Licensed by Lockheed, the supersonic fighter was known as the 'missile with a man in it' – its needle-like body and narrow wings made it extremely fast, but something of a deathtrap. Below is the museum's No 52 London Routemaster bus

Kağıthane

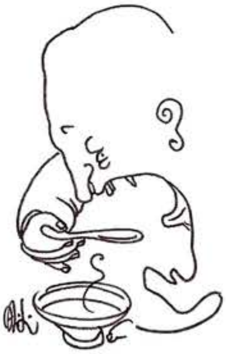
41 Santralistanbul Museum of Energy

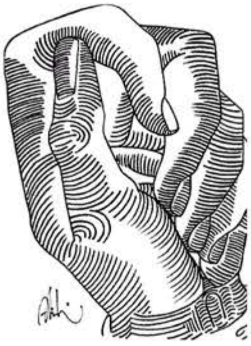
Istanbul's answer to Tate Modern, the Silahtarağa Electricity Plant, built in 1911, now Santralistanbul, became a hubbub of contemporary art and wining and dining when it opened in 2007. It is still a busy campus of Bilgi University (and you will need ID to get in), but the once-vibrant events calendar has fallen quiet. Of its original broad mix of exhibition spaces, the Energy Museum is all that remains, but it makes a dramatic finale to a tour of the Golden Horn. A rare example of well-preserved industrial heritage, it takes visitors inside the coal-fired power plant that gave Istanbul its electricity from

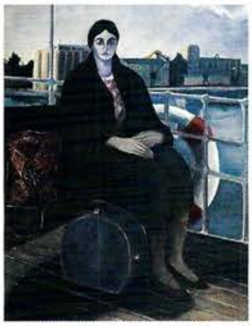




Top Silahtarağa Electricity Plant, the first Ottoman power station, now lovingly restored. The sculpture *To Infinity* was commissioned in 2007 from a 1987 prototype by İlhan Koman
Above and right The control room and the turbines. Visitors are free to wander







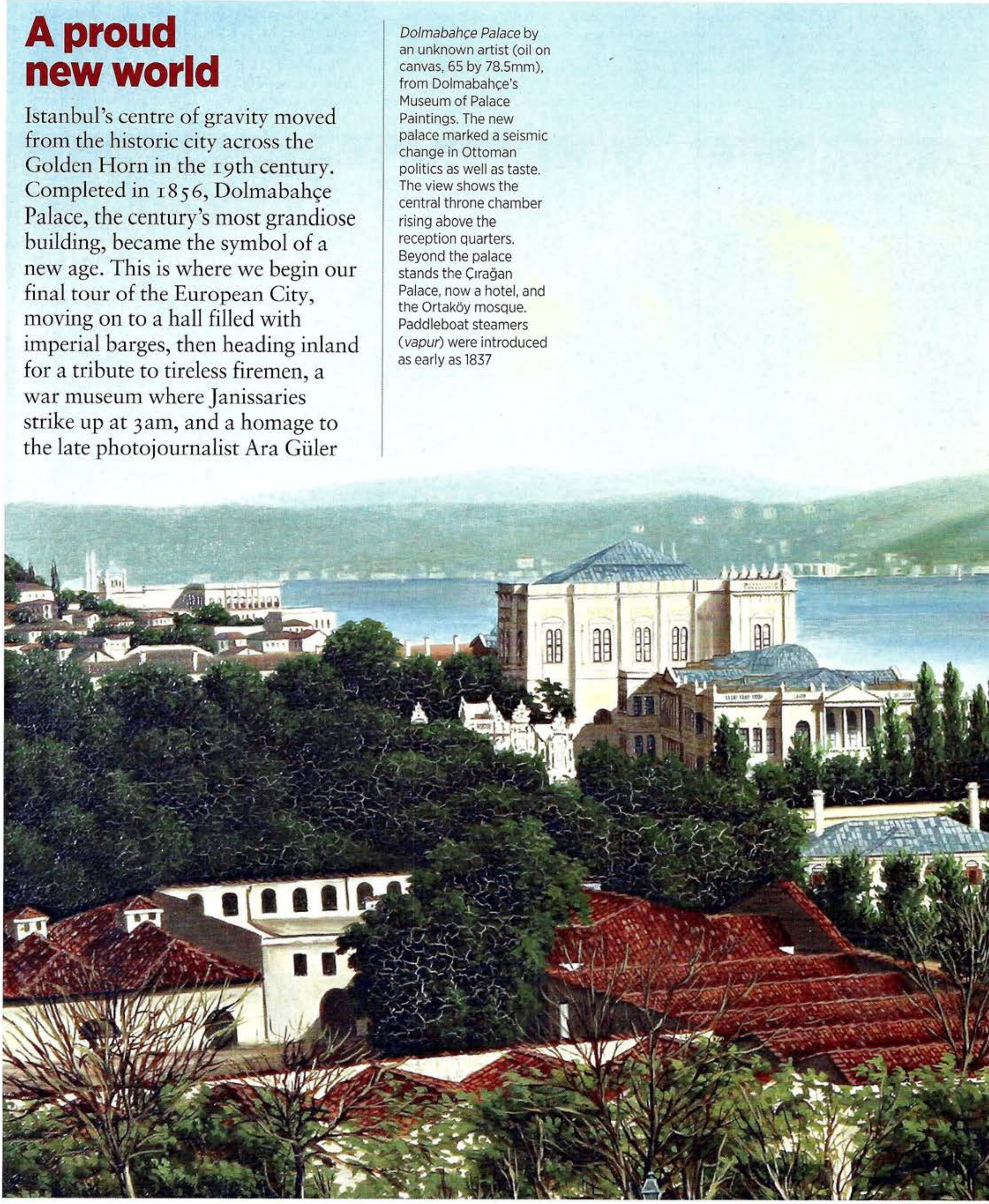
Rare sights The important art collection here, now seldom exhibited, represents a wide range of Turkish artists
Above left No 16 of the series *Hunger*, by Abidin Dino (1913–93), who was known for his drawings and writings
Above *Sol Yumruk* (*Left Fist*), part of his 1980s series *Hands*
Left A passenger on the Kadıköy ferry, by Mehmet Günsur (1955–2004)

1911 to 1983. The scale is impressive, as is the main control room at the top of the building, whose tiled floor, vaulted ceiling and half-moon of rust-tinged control desks – all switches, dials, wheels and levers – recall a time when electricity generation had grandeur and allure. The machines are genuinely beautiful, and the haptic games restore overdue wonder to a commodity long taken for granted. Below the control room, scholars pore over decades of social history. Workshops are hip canteens. Reading rooms lurk in the shadow of the turbines. It all feels unlike a museum, with a satisfying creative buzz.

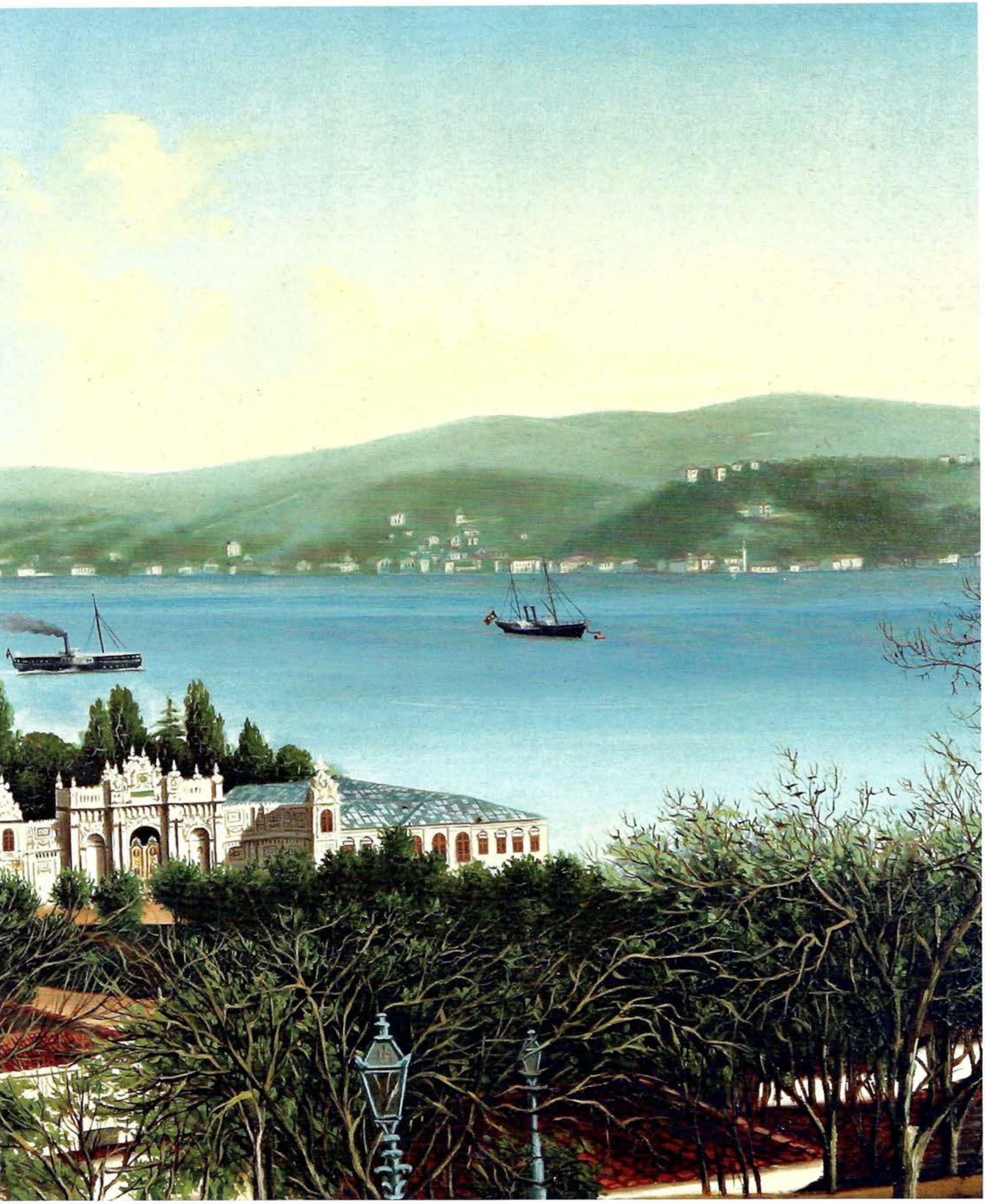
Santralistanbul *Eski Silahtarağa Elektrik Santralı,*
Bilgi Üniversitesi, Eyüp
Ferry: Sütlüce, then a taxi
Daily 9–6 (ID required)
santralistanbul.org/en/

A proud new world

Istanbul's centre of gravity moved from the historic city across the Golden Horn in the 19th century. Completed in 1856, Dolmabahçe Palace, the century's most grandiose building, became the symbol of a new age. This is where we begin our final tour of the European City, moving on to a hall filled with imperial barges, then heading inland for a tribute to tireless firemen, a war museum where Janissaries strike up at 3am, and a homage to the late photojournalist Ara Güler



Dolmabahçe Palace by an unknown artist (oil on canvas, 65 by 78.5mm), from Dolmabahçe's Museum of Palace Paintings. The new palace marked a seismic change in Ottoman politics as well as taste. The view shows the central throne chamber rising above the reception quarters. Beyond the palace stands the Çırağan Palace, now a hotel, and the Ortaköy mosque. Paddleboat steamers (*vapur*) were introduced as early as 1837



TC CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI MİLLİ SARAYLAR İDARESİ BAŞKANLIĞI, ENV. NO. 11/171

BRIAN MCKEE

42 Dolmabahçe Palace

Dolmabahçe means literally the "infilled garden", and it is that very garden, rather than the modern Baroque interior of the palace itself, that merits a detour.

Dolmabahçe is the ultimate waterfront property, commanding a huge stretch of the Bosphorus at the dramatic point where it opens out to the Sea of Marmara.

The palace was commissioned by Sultan Abdülmecid as a modern alternative to the old Topkapı Palace – but at a cost. The final bill in 1856 for 35 tonnes of gold helped push the Empire over the financial brink – worth recalling if the price of a tea beneath the famous clock tower seems steep.

For an idea of scale, stroll 400 yards along the quay, past towering magnolias and cedars, to the Crown Prince's wing at the northern end, now a separate museum. Beyond lies the kitchen, a stew-cooling walk from the dining halls.

There is much to see inside, from chandeliers to clocks. The architect was Garabet Balyan of the dynasty that built four other palaces in this guide, including Ihlamur Kasrı (p136) and, on the Asian side, Beylerbeyi (p152).

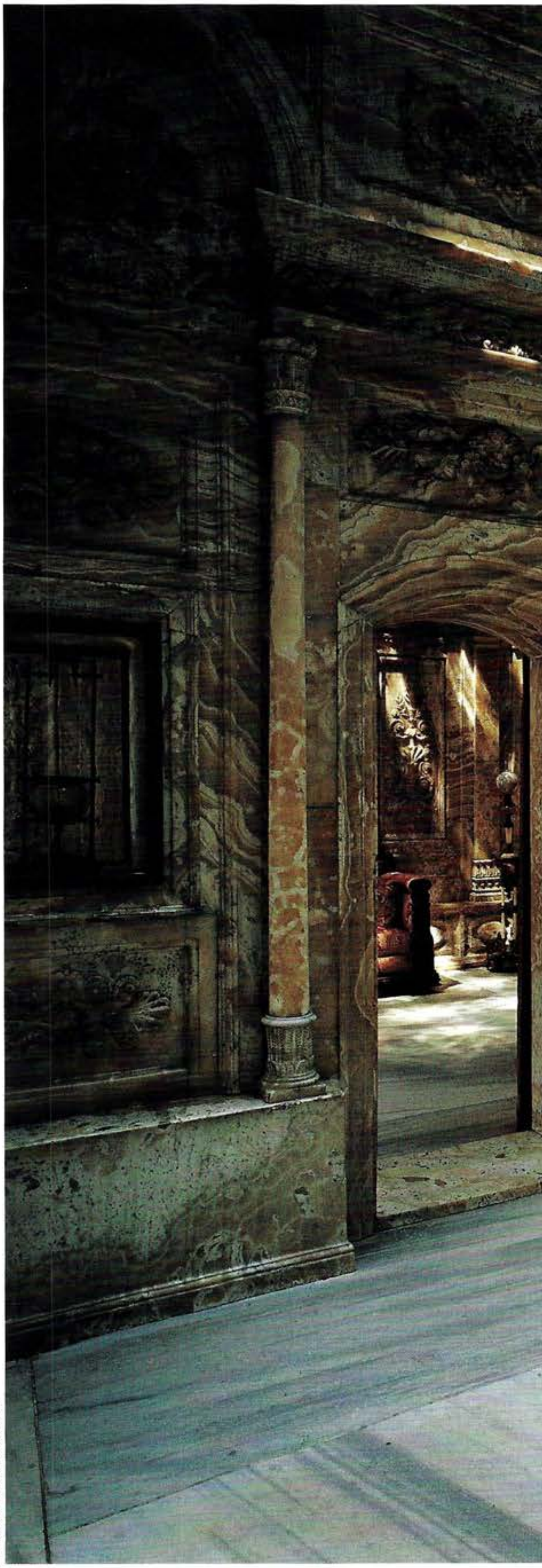
Arrive early, as numbers are limited to 3,000 a day.

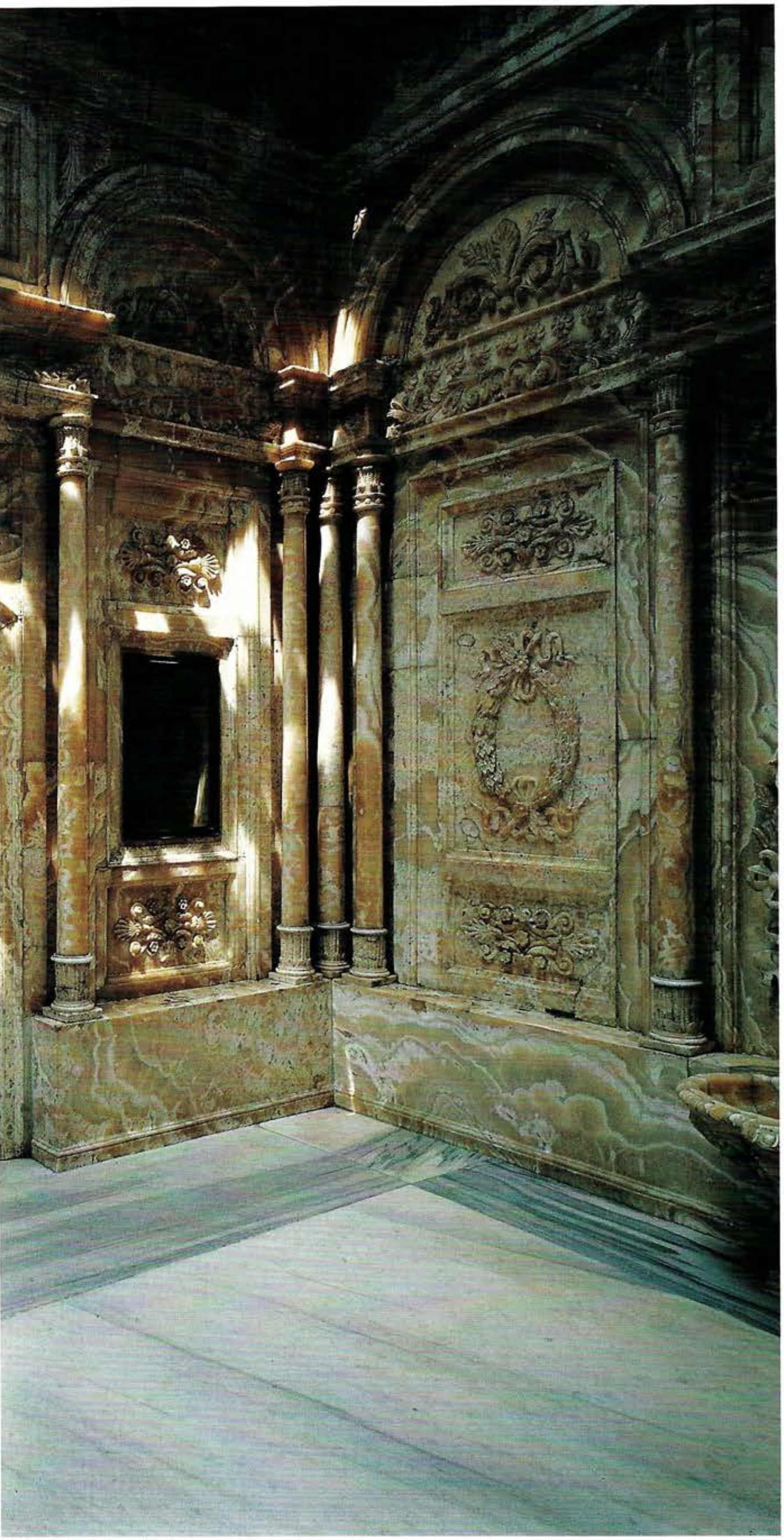
Dolmabahçe Sarayı
Tues–Sun 9–4
Ferry: Beşiktaş
+90 212 236 9000
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

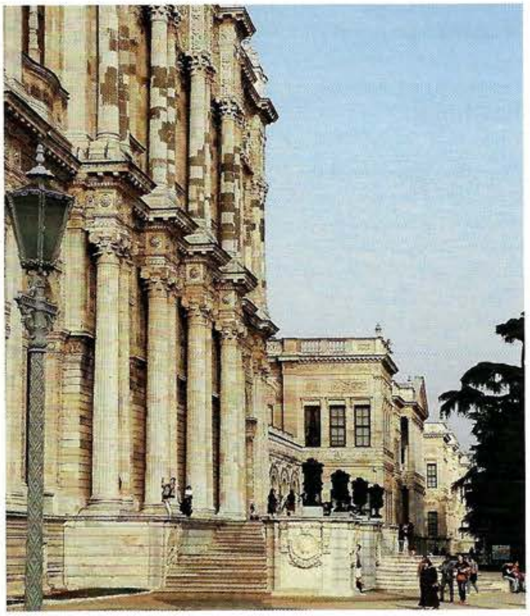
The palace gates
Above Morning light casts shadows through the magnificent iron gates

The Marble Hamam
Right and far right The walls of the bathing chamber are of beautiful watery alabaster. The hamam's splendid fountain is seen through the door from the massage chamber. Windows allowed lanterns to light both rooms

The façades
Far right from top The seaside façade blends Baroque with Neoclassical on a monumental scale. A swan fountain in the garden leads to the reception quarters. The Crown Prince's wing (now the Museum of Palace Paintings, overleaf) seen from the water


FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG





Beşiktaş

43 Dolmabahçe Museum of Palace Paintings

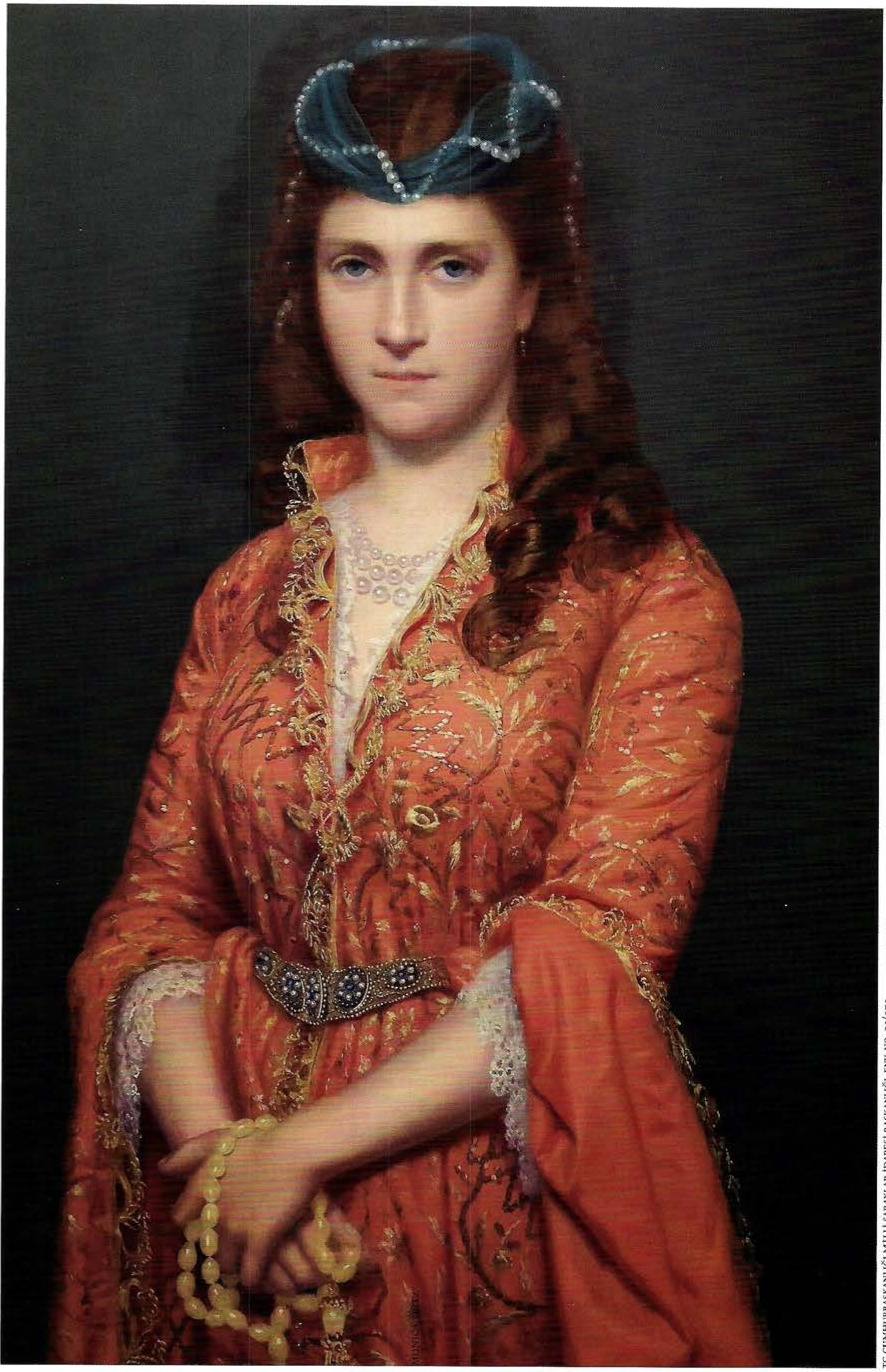
Atatürk opened the first museum of Western art here, a national gallery in all but name, in 1937. The Museum of Painting and Sculpture, a haunt for those nostalgic for old Istanbul, closed after the 1999 earthquake, though the collection will go on view in a new museum in 2020 (p117). After repairs, the palace's own collection moved in. It is a sanctuary that tells you all you need to know about the birth of easel painting in Turkey.

Sultans Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, whose full-length portraits greet you at the top of the stairs, built Dolmabahçe, acquiring hundreds of paintings. Art by Gérome, Boulanger and Fromentin came from Paris. The Russian titan Ivan Aivazovsky, who acquired palaces in St Petersburg and his native Crimea through his art and taught Abdülaziz, was among painters who made their mark at court. Another was Fausto Zonaro, whose 1,300 pictures of the city included a famous cavalry parade on Galata Bridge.

Turkish painters also played their part, among them the "Pasha painters", such as Şeker Ahmet Pasha and Ressam Tevfik Pasha (p155), officers who trained in Paris and often rose to the rank of general through their art.

With the new museum in Tophane and the Sakıp Sabancı Museum (p144) you can form a complete view of the city around the turn of the century.

Dolmabahçe Saray Resimleri Müzesi
Beşiktaş
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Beşiktaş
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr/muzeler/resim-muzesi



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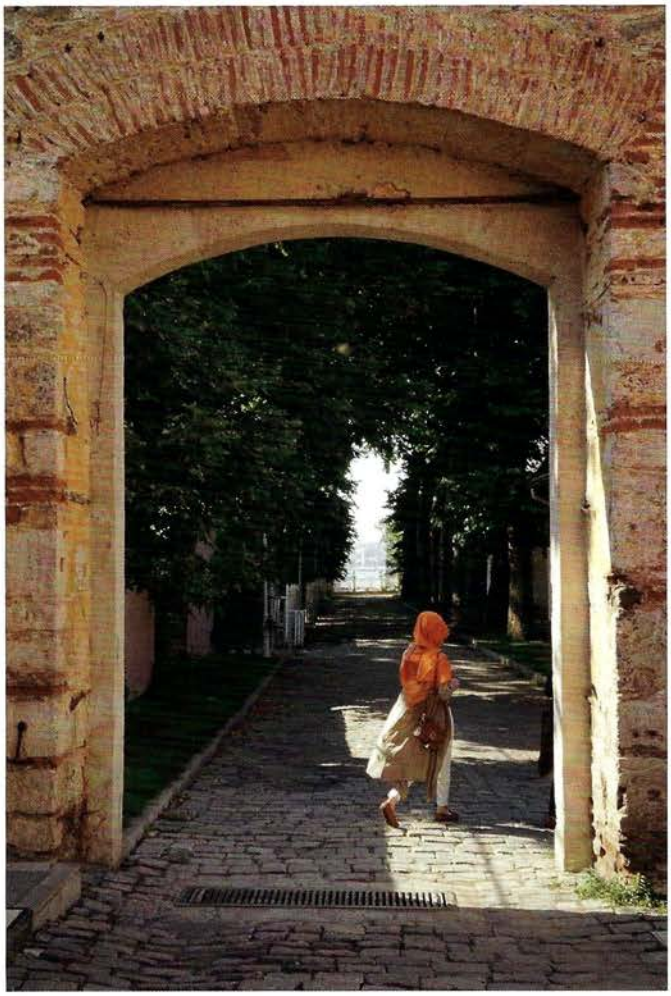


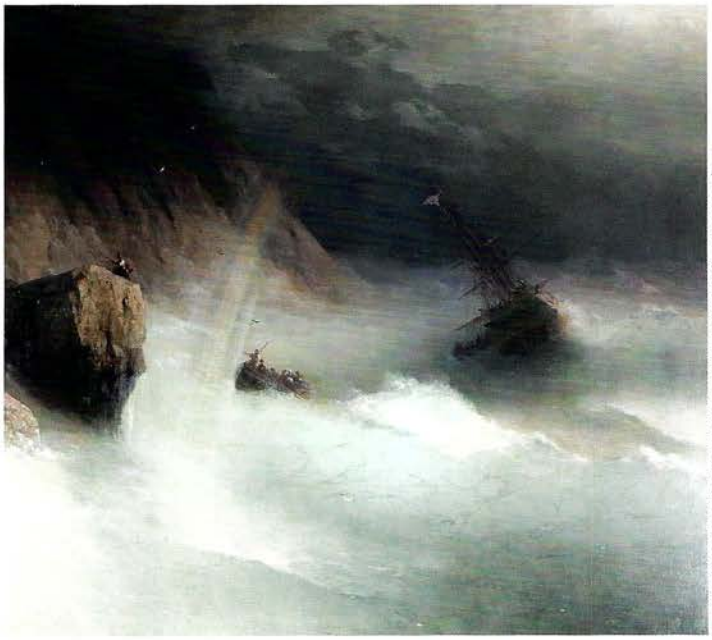
Opposite *Saraylı Kadın* (Palace Lady), 1875 (97 by 77.5cm), by Pierre Désiré Guillemet (1827–78), who set up the first art school in Istanbul in 1874. He made a number of portraits of palace women for Sultan Abdülaziz but died of typhoid working with refugees in the 1877–78 Turco-Russian War

Left and below Cobbles lead to the Crown Prince's wing of Dolmabahçe, now a gallery for the sultans' paintings

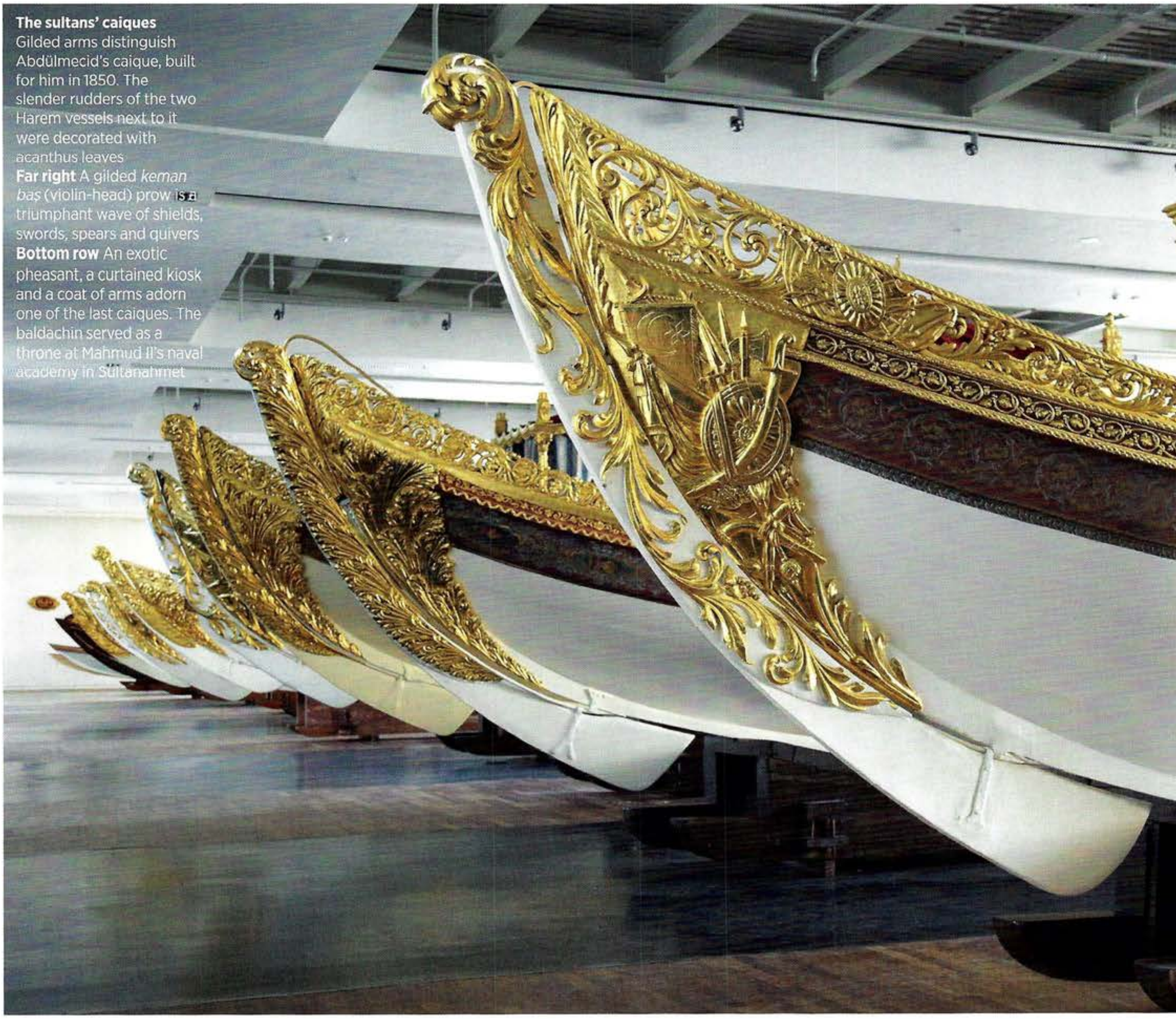
Bottom left The airy entrance hall with its painted ceiling

Bottom right *Shipwreck in a Stormy Sea*, 1874 (94 by 74.5cm), by the Russian Romantic painter Ivan Konstantinovich Aivazovsky (1817–1900), a royal favourite. Painter to Tsars Nicholas II and Alexander II, he had palaces in St Petersburg and his native Feodosia in Crimea. A frequent visitor to Istanbul, he was much admired by three successive sultans: Abdülmecid, Abdülaziz (who was his pupil) and Abdülhamid II. There are 31 of his works in the palace collection

PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ



TC CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI MILLI SARAYLAR İDARESI BAŞKANLIĞI, ENV. NO. 11/595



The sultans' caiques Gilded arms distinguish Abdülmecid's caique, built for him in 1850. The slender rudders of the two Harem vessels next to it were decorated with acanthus leaves

Far right A gilded *keman baş* (violin-head) prow is a triumphant wave of shields, swords, spears and quivers

Bottom row An exotic pheasant, a curtained kiosk and a coat of arms adorn one of the last caiques. The baldachin served as a throne at Mahmud II's naval academy in Sultanahmet

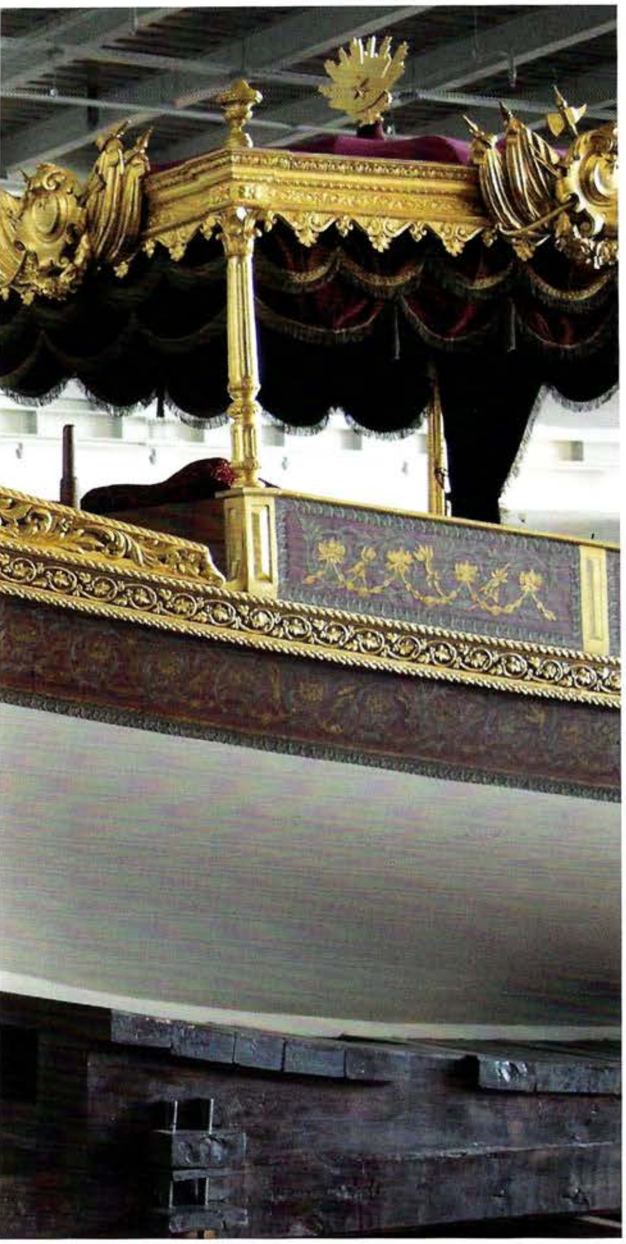
Beşiktaş

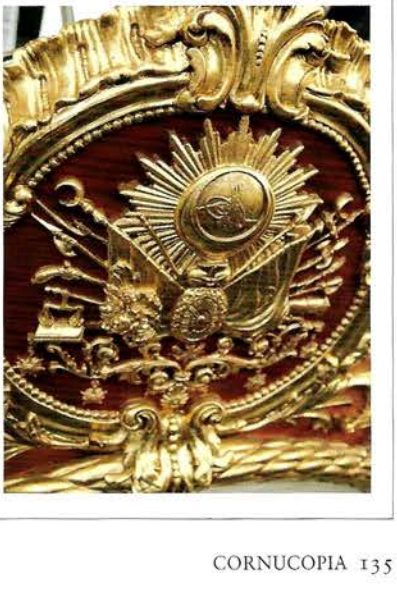
44 Naval Museum

These iconic ceremonial barges – one dating from the 15th century – carried sultans to their palaces and mosques well into the 20th century. They were so prized that during World War II they were moved 600 kilometres inland to Konya for safety. They are now displayed in a new hangar-like gallery on the busy Beşiktaş waterfront next to Dolmabahçe. Among the museum's other 20,000 artefacts an unexpected treat is a 1799 view from the Galata Tower by Aston Barker, a Scottish watercolourist – a vanished world of wooden houses and verdant gardens. Countless model ships in the newly reopened original wing also tell poignant stories, such as a battleship built in Newcastle, paid for by public subscription in Turkey, but never delivered.

Deniz Müzesi *Beşiktaş*
Tues–Sat 9–5, Sun 10–6
Ferry: Beşiktaş
+90 212 327 4345
denizmuzesi.dzkk.tsk.tr/en

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG





Beşiktaş

45 Fire Brigade Museum

Unless you were researching a novel about pyromaniac Janissaries, or you had a small child to entertain on a rainy afternoon, you might think there was little reason to visit this museum, perched above Beşiktaş. You would be wrong. Fires used to be such a feature of Istanbul life that firemen and their *tulumbas* (water pumps) appeared on postcards. Here you will see the city's first (German) motorised water pump, and paintings and photos of notable fires – including those of Galata and Beşiktaş in 1935, and a conflagration on a boat off Bebek in the 1990s.

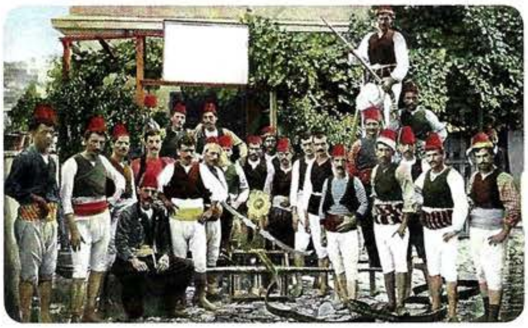
The museum is named after Count Odön Szechenyi, a Hungarian whose expertise was imported by Abdülaziz to establish a fire brigade after the devastating fire of 1871. He was rewarded with the title of pasha (the first non-Muslim to receive it).

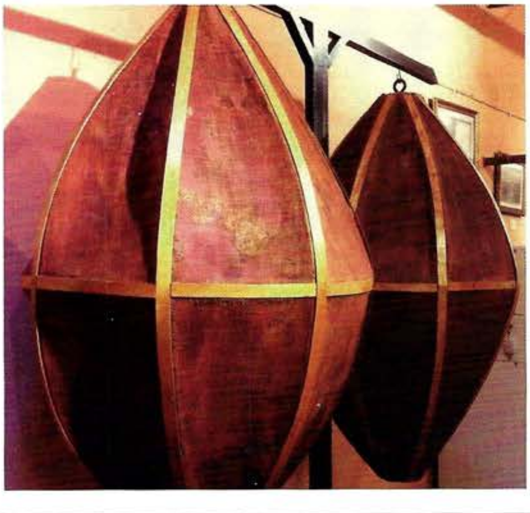
Two objects of immense beauty in the last room make the whole visit worthwhile: the colour-coded baskets used in the city's various watchtowers.

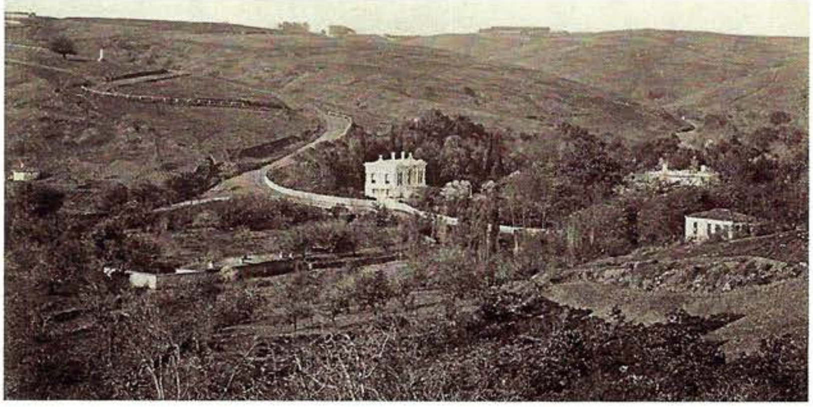
Two red baskets hanging from a watchtower meant a fire in Stamboul, the Old City; yellow denoted Beyoğlu. On the Beyazıt tower you can still see the metal arms from which the baskets hung. Fires were announced to the fire-tower officer with the phrase "A baby has arrived." A "baby boy" denoted that the fire was in Stamboul, the Old City; a "girl" fire would be one ravaging Beyoğlu.

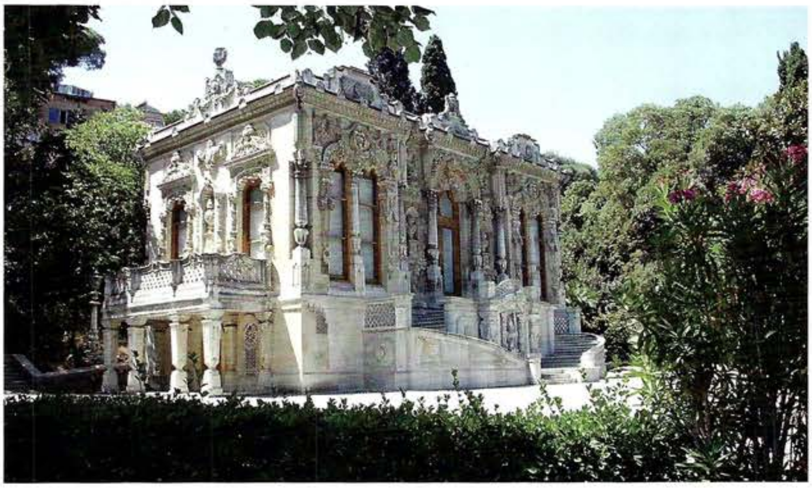
Kont Szechenyi İtfaiye Müzesi *Horoz Sok 1, Beşiktaş; Mon–Fri 9–4.30*
Ferry: Beşiktaş
+90 212 259 9124

Below The *tulumbacı*, the Ottoman fire brigade
Bottom Red 'signal baskets' warned of fire in the Old City









CLIVE CROOK

Ihlamur

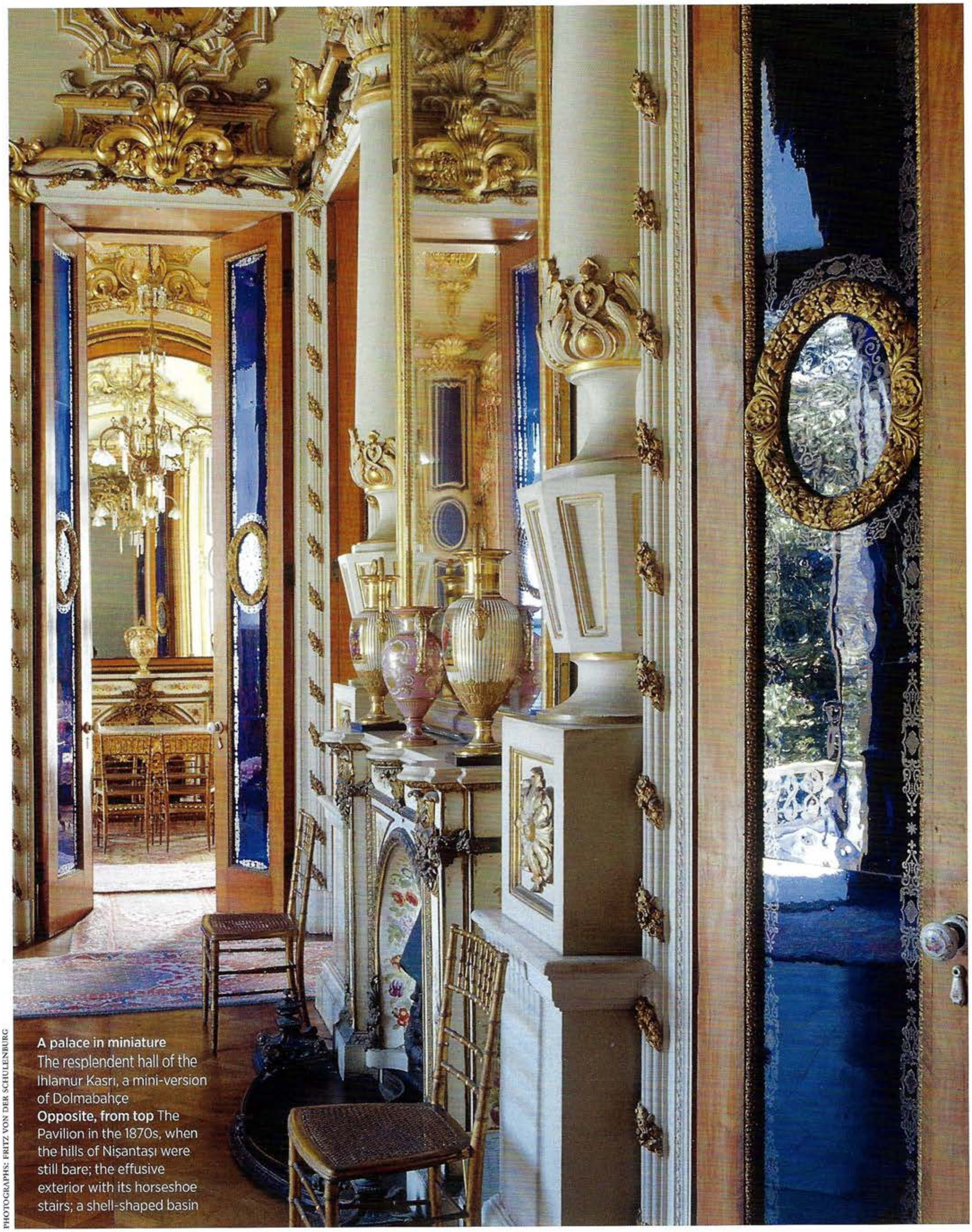
46 Ihlamur Kasrı

Set in an oasis of lovely gardens, home to peacocks (even one albino bird), ginkgo trees and the lindens from which this miniature marble palace takes its name, Ihlamur was Sultan Abdülmecid's favourite *maison de plaisance*, and is the perfect Baroque hit for anyone daunted by the queues and bombast of Dolmabahçe. Both were built and embellished by the Balyan family between 1849 and 1855. Mirrored halls are richly decorated: lapis lazuli faux marble, dark blue stained glass and gildings give the interior a magical quality.

Ever since its high garden walls were ill-advisedly replaced by railings, you have had to think away the swirl of traffic, especially on Saturdays when the large Ihlamur weekly market is held next door. Sadly, many trees were felled at the same time as the walls were demolished. Nevertheless, some of the broad-leafed lindens noted by Lamartine in 1847 survive to fill the congested valley with their honeyed perfume in early summer.

In the Retinue Pavilion (*Merasim Köşkü*), on the other side of the ornamental pond, now a café, the consumptive Abdülmecid, most romantic of all the sultans, breathed his last.

Ihlamur Kasrı
Ihlamur, Beşiktaş
Tues–Sun 9–5
Taxi ride or a 15-min walk from Beşiktaş or Nişantaşı
+90 212 259 5086
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr



A palace in miniature The resplendent hall of the Ihlamur Kasrı, a mini-version of Dolmabahçe

Opposite, from top The Pavilion in the 1870s, when the hills of Nişantaşı were still bare; the effusive exterior with its horseshoe stairs; a shell-shaped basin

PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

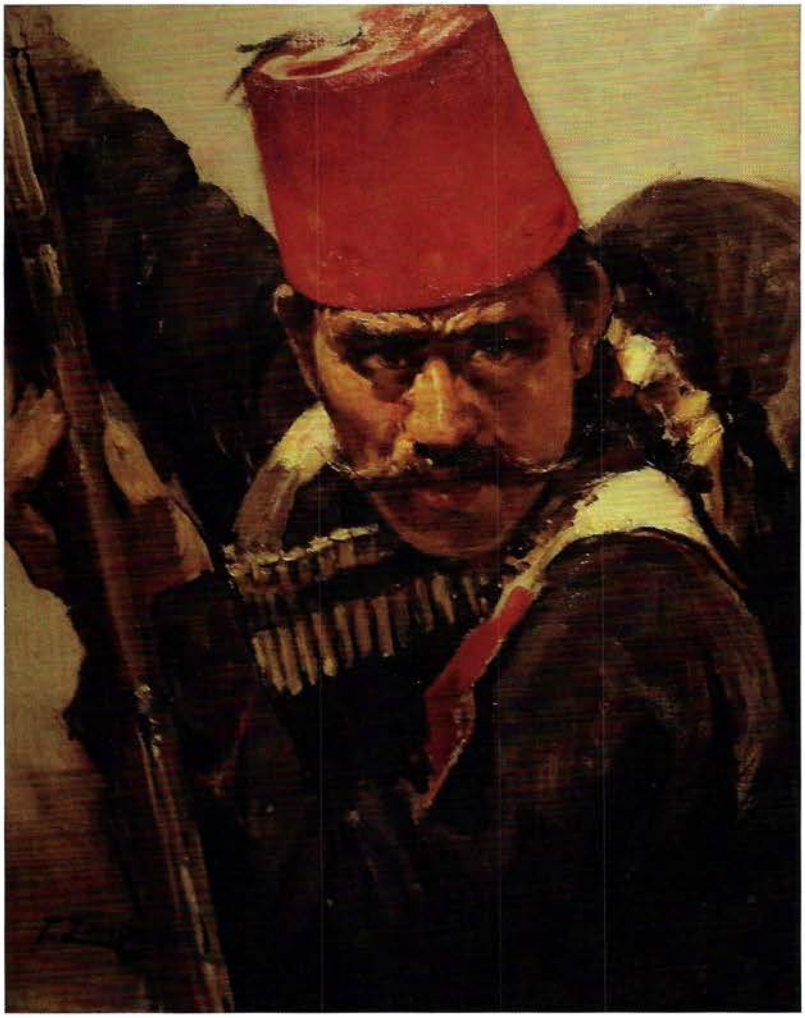
Nişantaşı

47 Military Museum

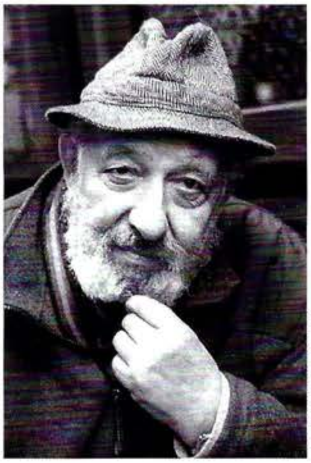
The vast, quaint Military Museum offers snapshots of fascinating episodes in Turkish history, covering the broad sweep of military exploits – from the initial drive west of the Turkic peoples, to the Dardanelles campaign. The museum is also an unexpected repository for many quite unwarlike artefacts from Yıldız Palace. At 3pm the 50-strong Janissary band (*Mehter Bölüğü*) in traditional uniform and sporting magnificent moustaches plays stirring marches with *zurna*, *çevgen*, *zil* and *boru*.

Harbiye Askeri Müzesi
Valikonağı Cad, Nişantaşı
Wed–Sun 9–4.30
Metro: Osmanbey
+90 212 233 2720
www.askerimuze.tsk.tr

Right *Portrait of a Private*, by Abdülhamid II's court painter Fausto Zonaro, a study for *The Attack* of 1897. As Zonaro was not allowed to go to the front when war broke out with Greece, soldiers posed for him in the garden of Yıldız Palace **Below** The museum Janissary band performs at the Topkapı



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



Bomonti

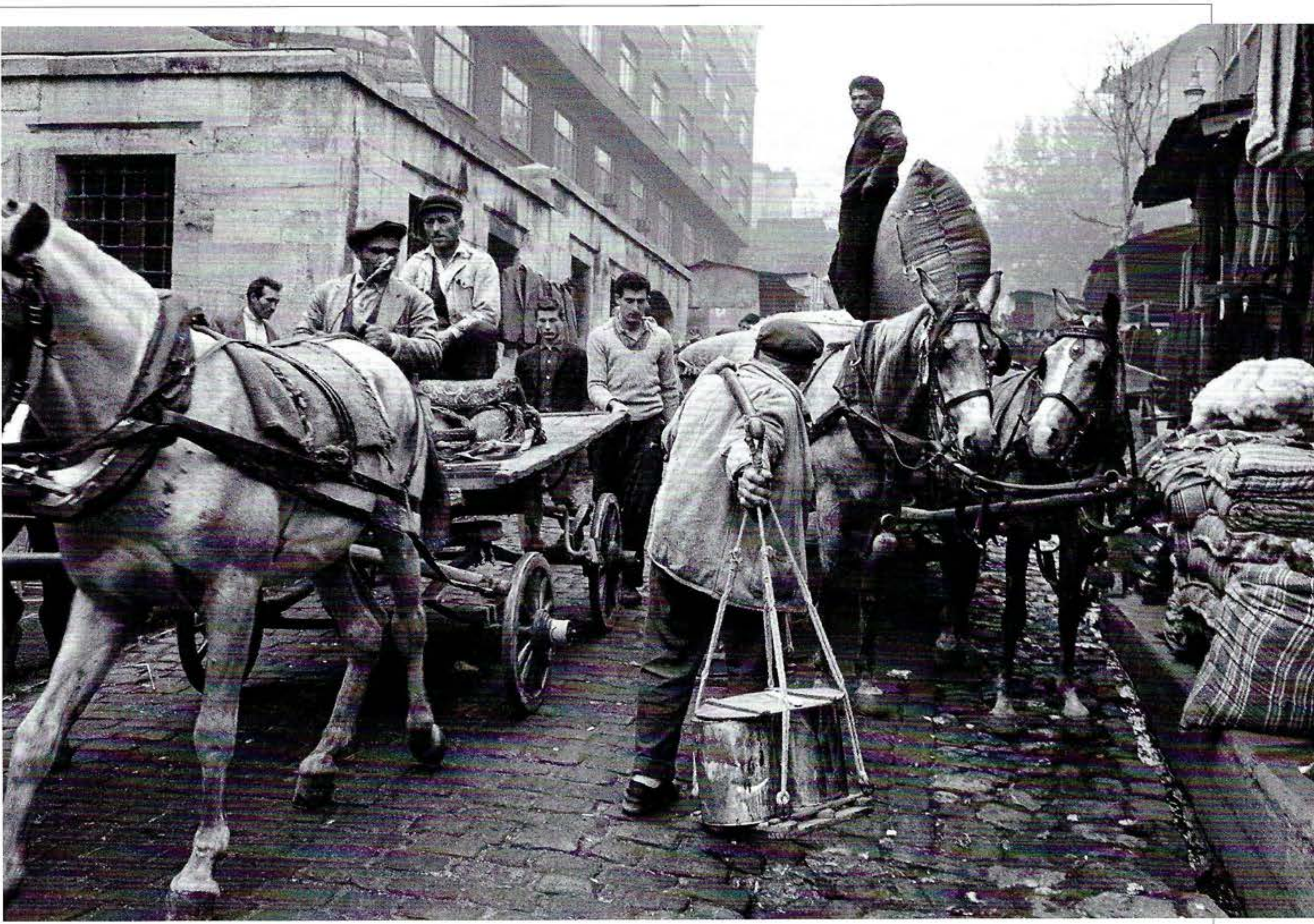
48 Ara Güler Museum

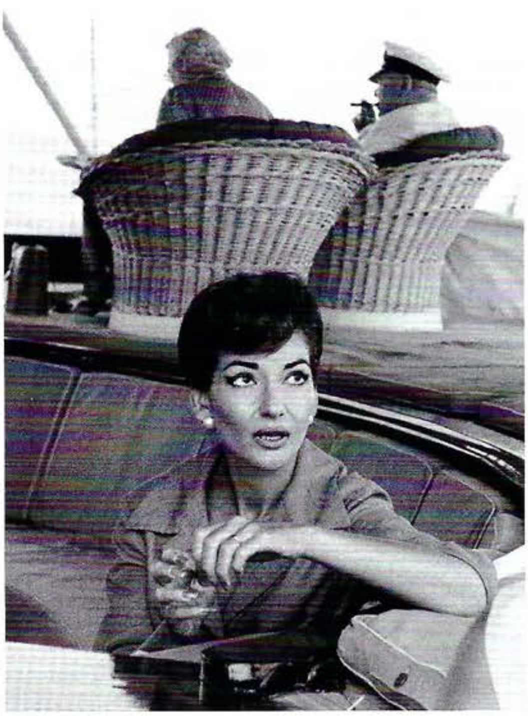
Without the great Magnum photojournalist Ara Güler (above), the golden age of post-World War II Istanbul would have been lost for ever. But the canny fellow not only captured the humanity of the age, he made sure that his legacy would survive. On his 90th birthday in August 2018, he got his own museum in the Bomontiada arts centre, the former Bomonti Beer Factory (below). He was to die just a few weeks later.

A massive operation is in full swing to digitise and catalogue some 70,000 images taken between 1955 and Ara's death.

Equally at ease with the glitterati on their yachts and the low life on the Golden Horn – to which he famously introduced Henri Cartier-Bresson in 1964 – he captured ruins, too. Aphrodisias was recently the subject of one of the museum's first exhibitions.

Ara Güler Müzesi
Tarihi Bomonti Bira Fabrikası, Bomonti, Şişli
Tues–Sat 10–6, Sun 12–6
Metro: Osmanbey
+90 212 335 9595
aragulermuzesi.com

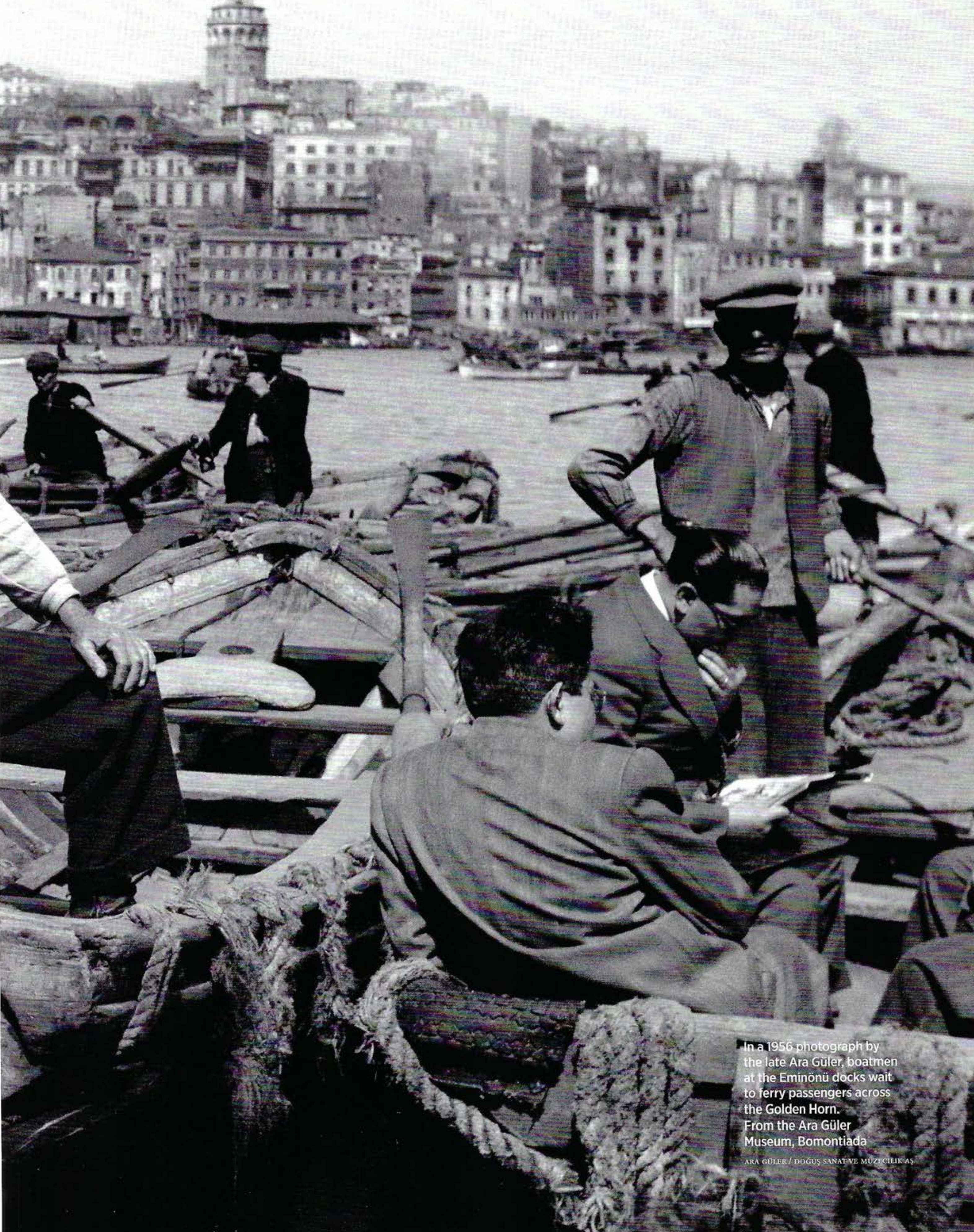




PHOTOGRAPHS: ARA GÜLER / DOĞUŞ SANAT VE MÜZECILIK AŞ

MONICA FRITZ

History in black and white
Above Ara Güler shot this traffic jam in front of a bedding shop in Tahtakale, in the Old City's bazaar district, in 1966
Far left Maria Callas on board the Onassis yacht *Christina* with the Churchills, on a visit to Istanbul in 1957
Opposite, top Ara Güler in San Francisco, 1972, by the American photographer Imogen Cunningham
Opposite, below The Bomonti brewery, now a cultural and culinary hub and home to the Ara Güler Museum
Above left The conservator Temel Yılmaz and archaeologist Başar Soysal at work on Ara Güler's archive
Left Magnifying a photograph of villagers in Aphrodisias – Ara Güler's chance discovery of the site in 1958 led to its excavation



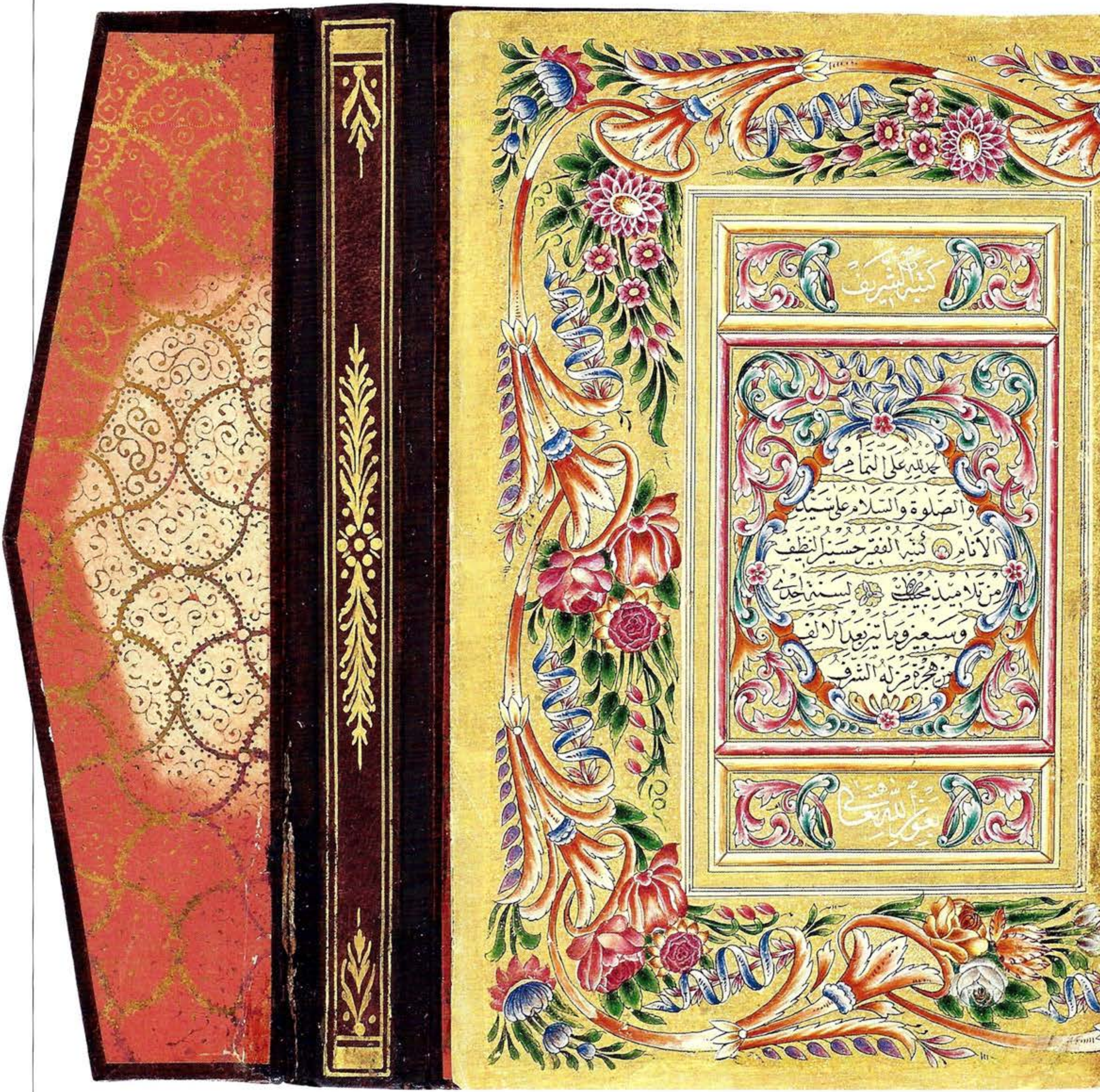
In a 1956 photograph by the late Ara Güler, boatmen at the Eminönü docks wait to ferry passengers across the Golden Horn. From the Ara Güler Museum, Bomontiada

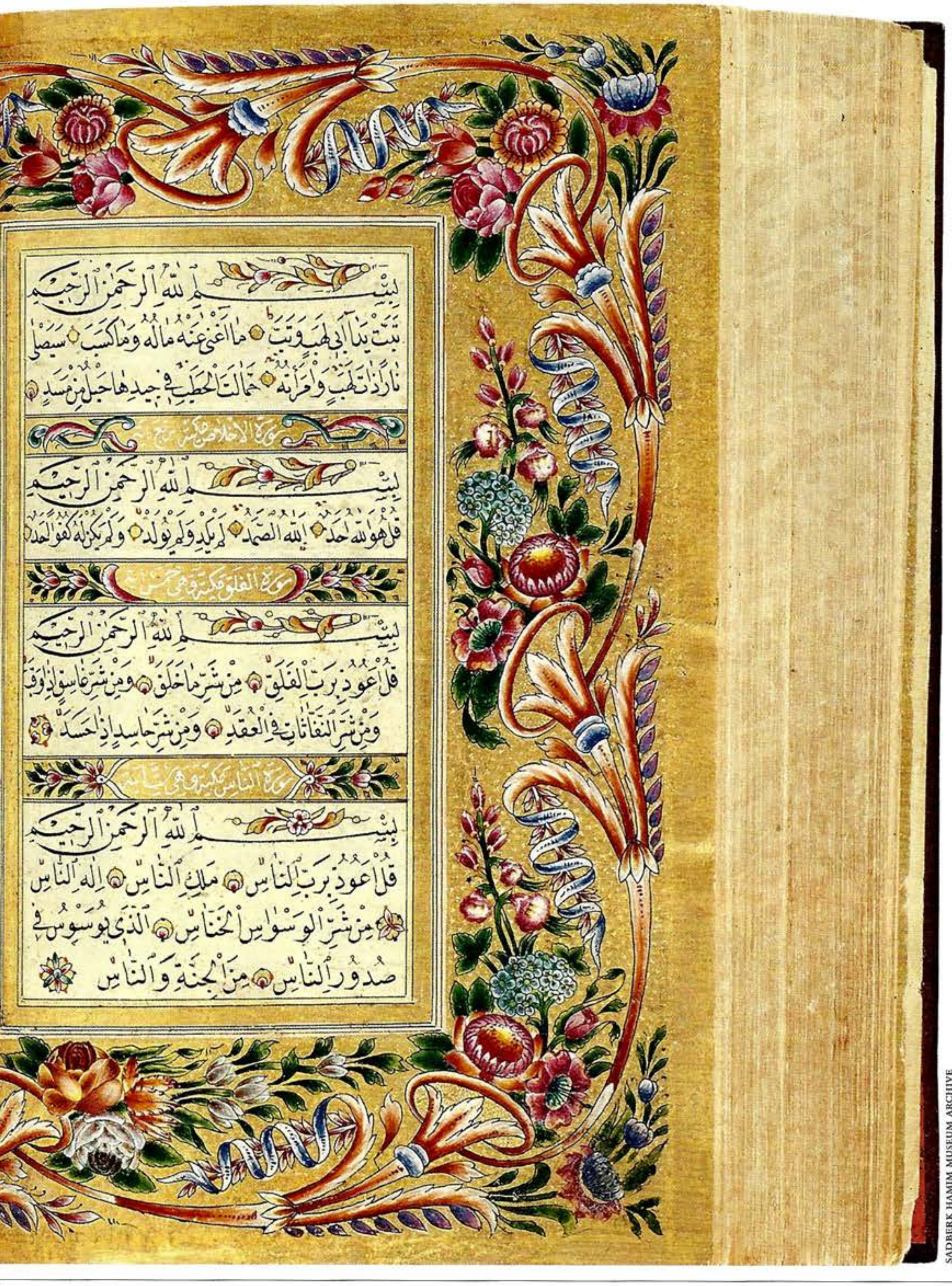
ARA GÜLER / DOĞUŞ SANAT VE MÜZECILIK AŞ

Bosphorus beauties

Private collectors' museums

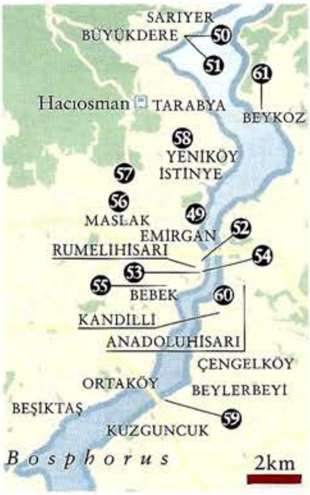
Two private museums, the Sakıp Sabancı and the Sadberk Hanım, make a trip up the European shore essential. Other treats include a car museum, a poet's house and two contemporary art galleries. Best to go by ferry…





بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
تبت يدا ابي لهب وتب ما اغنى عنه ماله وما كسب سيصلى
نارا ذات لهب وامرأته حمالة الحطب في جيدها حبل من مسد
سورة الاخلاص مكية [illegible]
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
قل هو الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفوا احد
سورة الفلق مكية وهي خمس
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
قل اعوذ برب الفلق من شر ما خلق ومن شر غاسق اذا وقب
ومن شر النفاثات في العقد ومن شر حاسد اذا حسد
سورة الناس مكية وهي ست [illegible]
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
قل اعوذ برب الناس ملك الناس اله الناس
من شر الوسواس الخناس الذي يوسوس في
صدور الناس من الجنة والناس

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM ARCHIVE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MASLAK
EMİRGAN
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RUMELIHISARI
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BEBEK
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KANDILLI
ANADOLUHISARI
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ORTAKÖY
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BEŞIKTAŞ
59
KUZGUNCUK
Bosphorus
2km

SUSANNA HICKLING

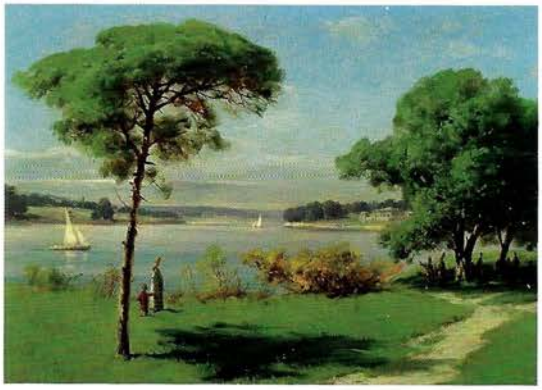
In 2020 the Sadberk Hanım Museum celebrates its 40th anniversary. This dedication page of a 19th-century Koran is part of its exhibition of calligraphy and illumination, *Harmony of Line*. The text tells us that 'The poor Hüseyn en-Nazif, pupil of Mustafa Mucib, wrote this in the year 1271 [1854/55].' The flowers and cornucopias are typical of what is known as Şumnu work, a style then popular in Istanbul, which originated in what is now Bulgaria, but was then part of the Empire

GETTING AROUND THE BOSPHORUS

Ferries have proliferated. Many of the museums listed here are an easy walk from a ferry station. But you need to master the timetables (www.sehirhatlari.istanbul). Most routes stick to one side of the Bosphorus, but there are places where you can cross if you want to go from European museum to Asian palace. The M2 metro is useful for getting to the top of the European side while avoiding downtown traffic. It is a short taxi ride to the museums from İTÜ-Ayazağa, Atatürk Oto Sanayi, Darüşşafaka and Hacıosman. The new Boğaziçi-Hisarüstü metro station is handy for Rumelihisarı and Emirgan.

BRIAN MCKEE

Left The Upper Bosphorus from the terrace of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum
Below A 16th-century Koran attributed to Sheikh Hamdullah (1436–1520), the father of Ottoman calligraphy
Right and bottom left Landscapes by Hoca Ali Rıza (1858–1930), who taught a new generation of Turkish artists to paint from nature
Bottom right A bound chapter of the Koran, 1440, the earliest manuscript in the collection



Emirgan

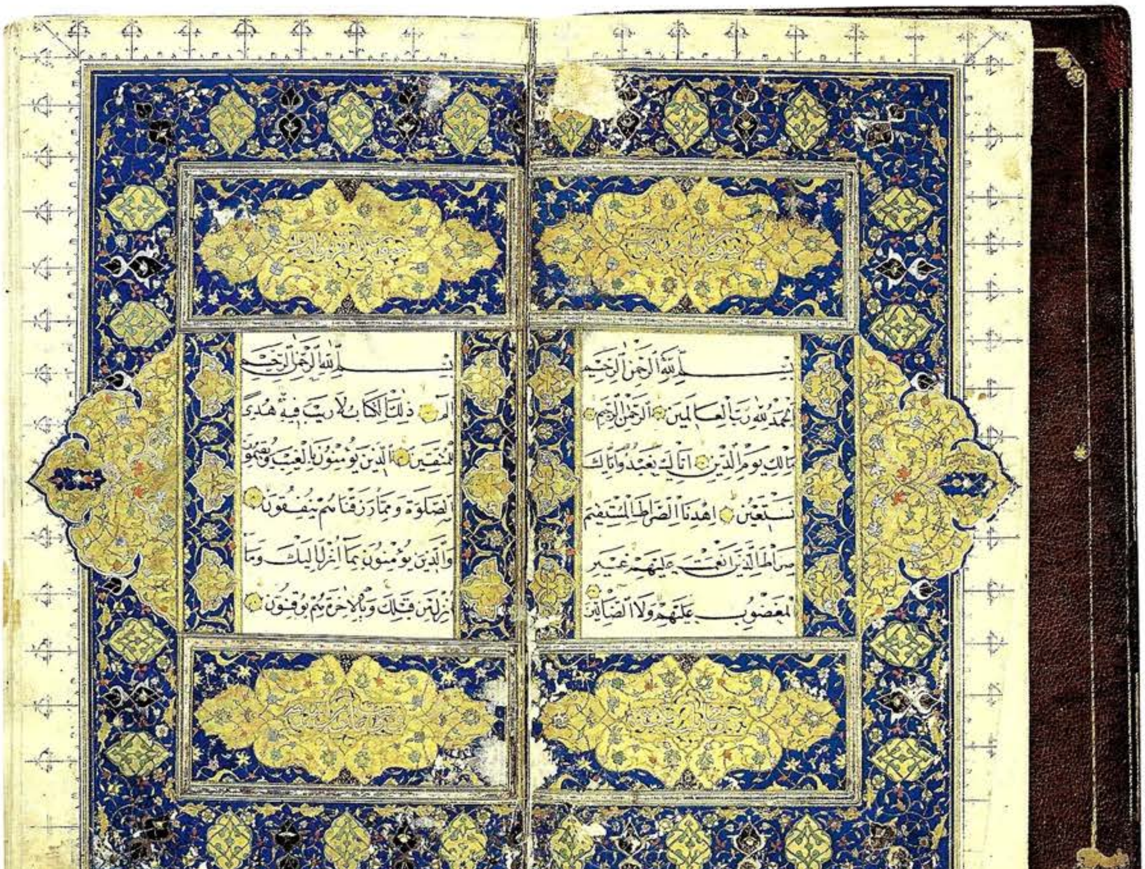
49 Sakıp Sabancı Museum

The Sakıp Sabancı is set in meticulous gardens with a view of the Bosphorus that is hard to forget. The tireless director, Nazan Ölçer, concentrates on blockbusters: Picasso, Monet, Joan Miró and Genghis Khan have all landed here, as well as less obvious collections from Poland and the Louvre. The SSM's own paintings illustrate a crucial period when Turkish artists could emulate the West without loss of dignity. The "1914 Generation", known as the "Turkish Impressionists", took over the art world on their return from Paris.

The cavernous exhibition wing is skilfully built into the hillside next to the Atlı Köşk (Horse Mansion), the 1925 villa named after the Louis Daumas equestrian bronze by the shore. In the house itself are the superb Arts of the Book and Calligraphy galleries. A sleek concert hall, The Seed, hosts the Istanbul Recitals series. The restaurant, MSA, is run by Istanbul's Culinary Arts Academy.

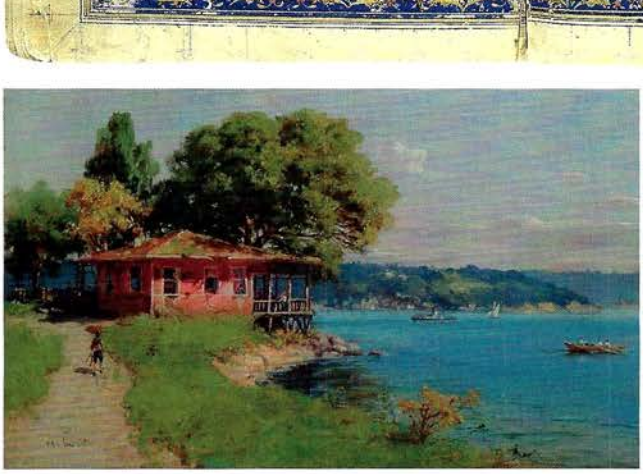
When you are ready to leave the museum, ask them to call a taxi to take you from the hilltop site.

Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi
Emirgan
Tues–Sun 10–6 (Wed 10–8)
Metro: Boğazici-Hisarüstü or İTÜ-Ayazağa, then a taxi
Ferry: Emirgan
+90 212 277 2200
sakipsabancimuzesi.org/en

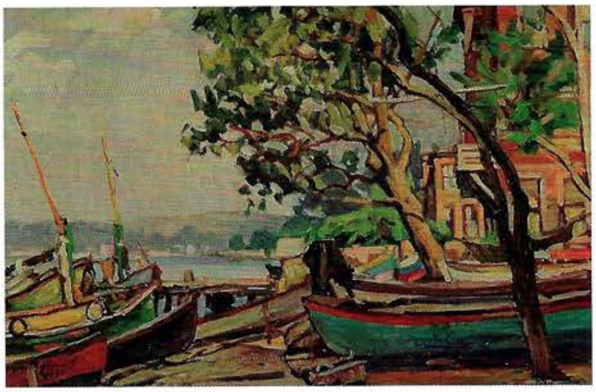


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين الرحمن الرحيم
مالك يوم الدين اياك نعبد واياك
نستعين اهدنا الصراط المستقيم
صراط الذين انعمت عليهم غير
المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الم ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى
للمتقين الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويقيمون
الصلوة ومما رزقناهم ينفقون
والذين يؤمنون بما انزل اليك وما
انزل من قبلك وبالآخرة هم يوقنون



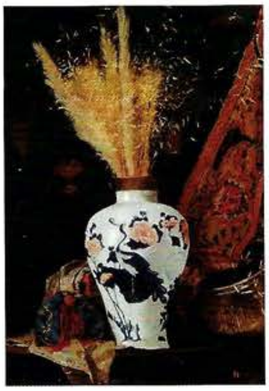
ALL IMAGES: SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM

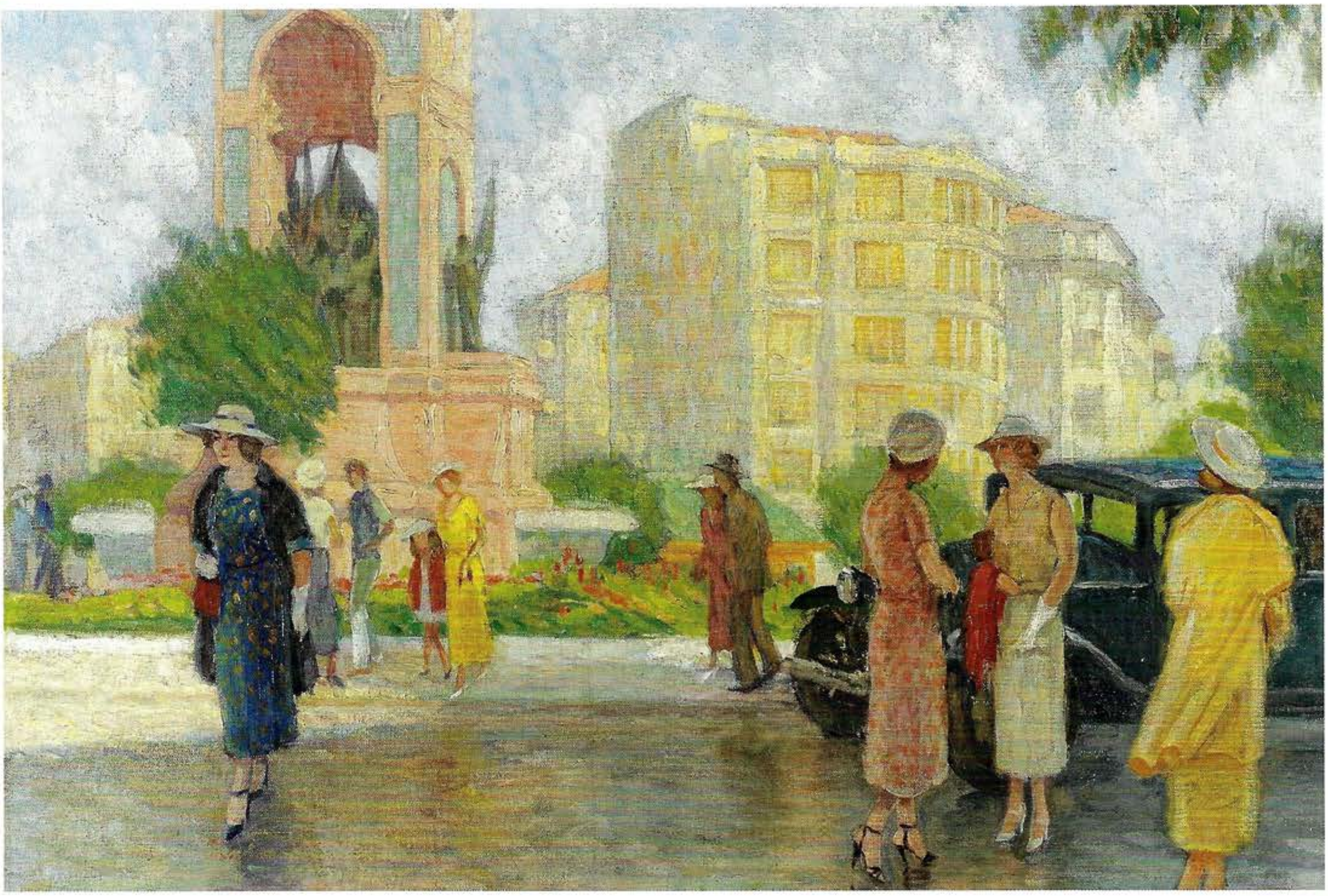


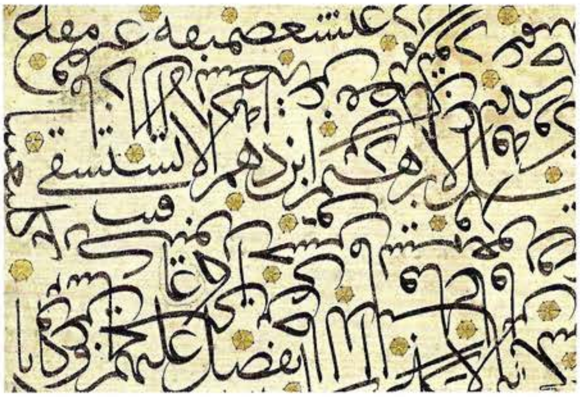
Left Bosphorus fishing boats drawn up on the shore in Yalıköy, close to the Beykoz ferry station, painted in 1960 by Hikmet Onat (1882–1977), who spent four years in Paris, returning at the outbreak of war in 1914

Below *Taksim Square*, 1935, by Nazmi Ziya Güran (1881–1937), who took lessons from Hoca Ali Rıza before leaving for Paris and discovering Monet. He returned in 1913 with a French wife. His painting of Istanbul's *beau monde* in front of Pietro Canonica's 1928 Republic Monument, seen against modern apartments, became a symbol of the new Turkey

Right *Flowers in a White Vase*, by Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910). The vase is a Chinese copy of Japanese Arita ware, popular in the late 19th century

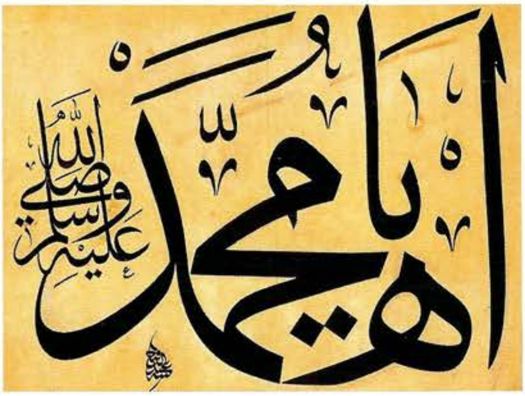






Left Calligraphy exercises, or *karalama*, by masters were much treasured. This one, in the Sülüs script, is by the great Ahmed Karahisârî (1470–1556)

Right 'Ah Ya Muhammed' reads this panel by Abdülfettah Efendi (1814–96), a talented convert from Sakız Adası (Chios) and one of the finest calligraphers of his day, who rose to become head of the imperial mint and drew the *tuğra* (cipher) on the first Ottoman postage stamps



Büyükdere

50 Sadberk Hanım Museum

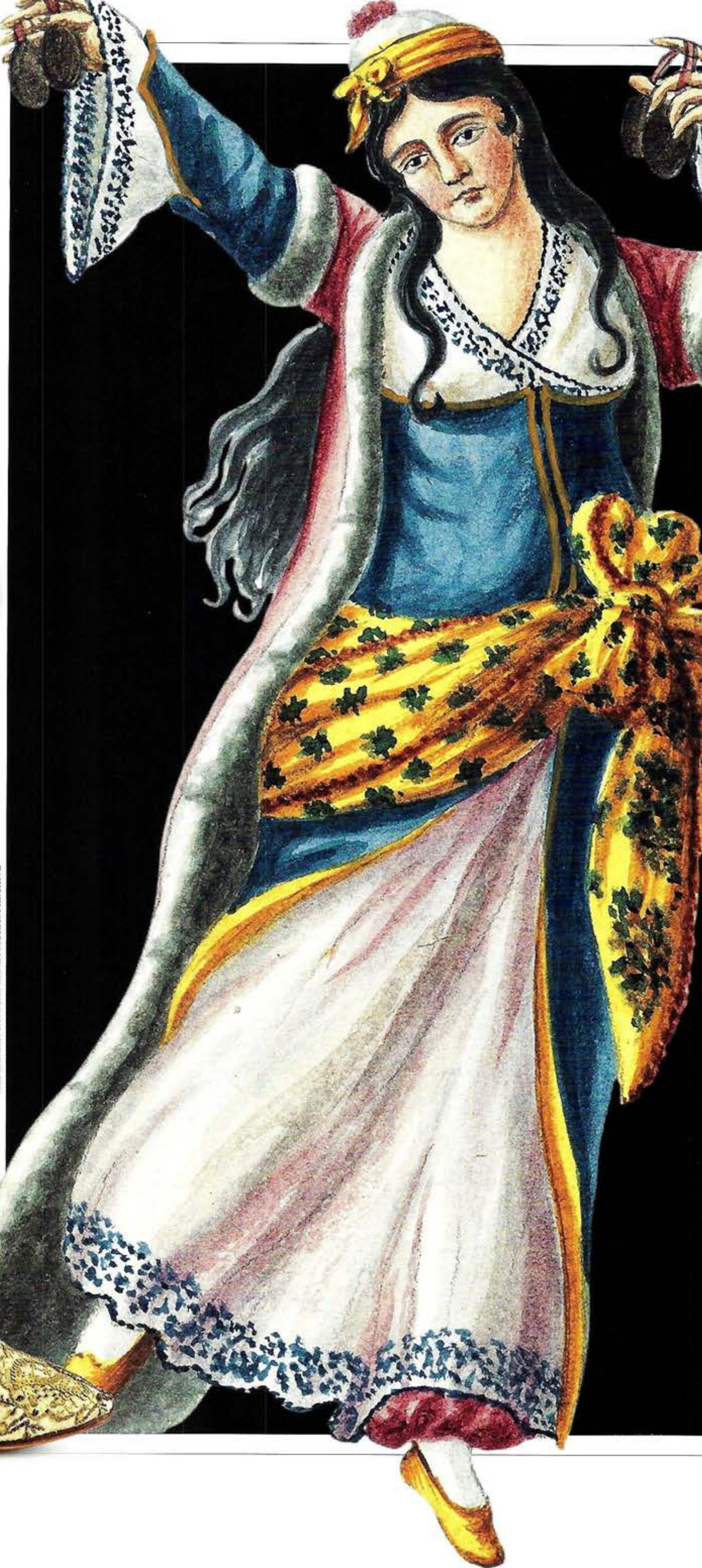
This wooden yalı houses the exceptional Vehbi Koç collection of late Ottoman costumes, Chinese porcelain and a growing hoard of Iznik pottery. Founded in 1980 in memory of Koç's wife, Sadberk Hanım, it is filled with riches from the Ottoman Empire, and, in a separate wing, a collection of antiquities bequeathed by Hüseyin Kocataş. New acquisitions include this 3rd-millennium BC figurine from western Anatolia.

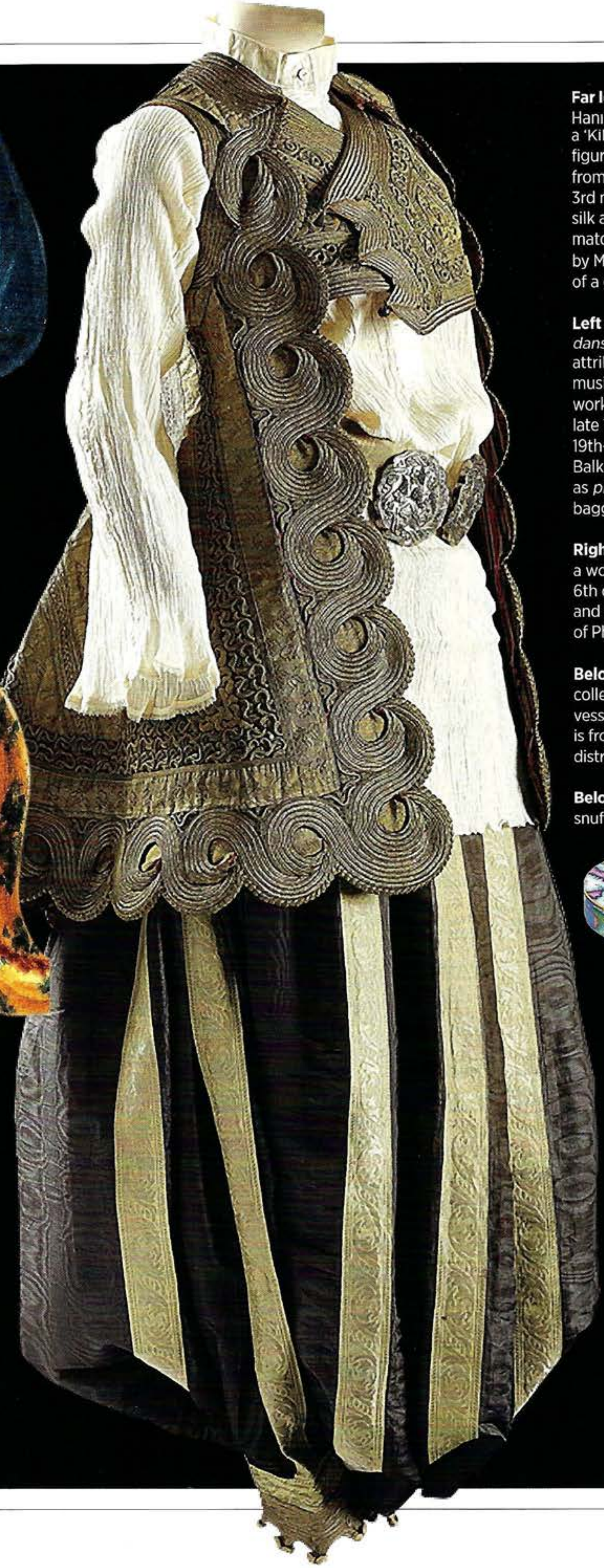
As the collection has outgrown the house (burgeoning from 3,000 to 20,000 artefacts), a move to new premises on the Golden Horn is anticipated. Shows drawing on the museum's huge collections, staged twice a year, are the only real clue to the wonders out of sight.

A good way to visit is to take the ferry to Sarıyer, then stroll down to the museum, calling in along the way to see the Josephine Powell kilims (overleaf). The museum has a very good little shop. Catalogues available from cornucopia.net.

Sadberk Hanım Müzesi
Piyasa Cad 27, Büyükdere
Daily 10–5, closed Wed
Ferry: Büyükdere
Metro: Hacıosman then a taxi or minibus
+90 212 242 3813; www.sadberkhanimmuzesi.org.tr

ALL IMAGES: SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM ARCHIVE





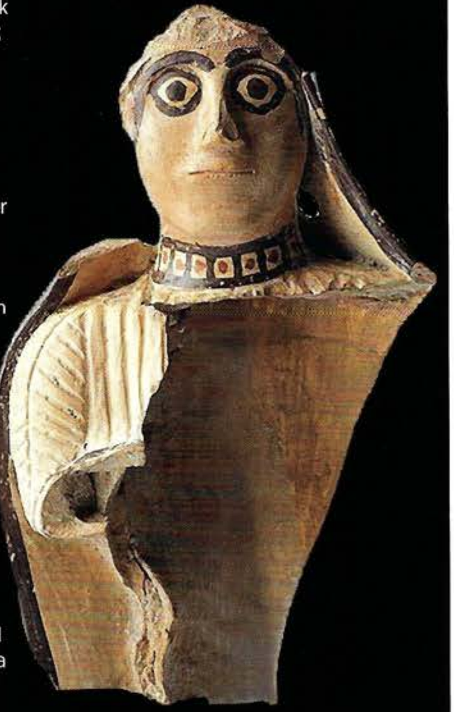
Far left from top The Sadberk Hanım Museum from the sea; a 'Kilya-type' female marble figurine just 12.2cm high, from western Anatolia, 3rd millennium BC; Ottoman silk ankle boots, worn with matching dress in 1893–94 by Memduha Hanım, daughter of a governor of Bursa

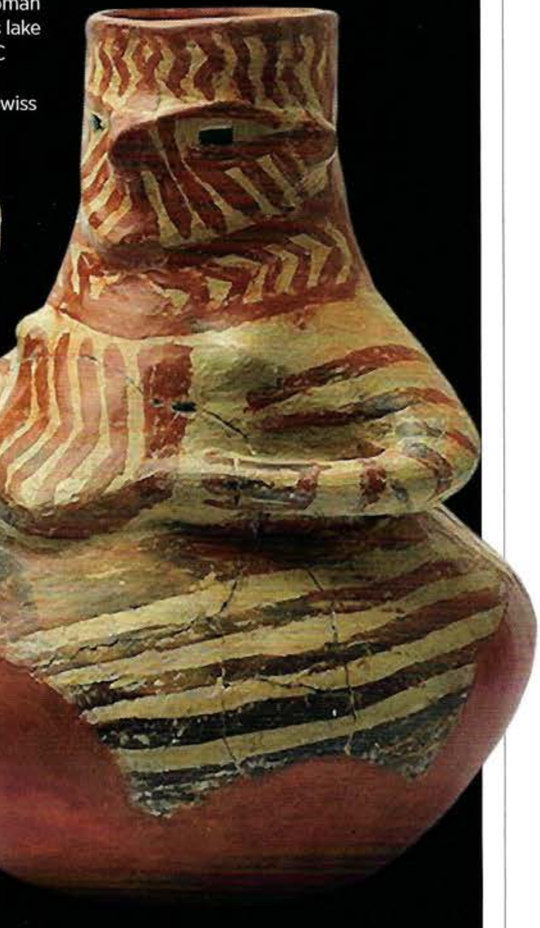
Left *Femme du sérail qui danse*, from a costume album attributed to Menzoni, a musician and decorator working in Istanbul in the late 18th century; and a 19th-century Ottoman-Balkan coat known as *pirpiri*, worn with baggy *şalvar* trousers

Right Archaic figurine of a woman with a mantle, 6th century BC. The surface and painting style are typical of Phrygia in western Anatolia

Below right A star of the collection, this terracotta vessel in the form of a woman is from western Anatolia's lake district, 6th millennium BC

Below Gold and enamel Swiss snuffbox, 19th century





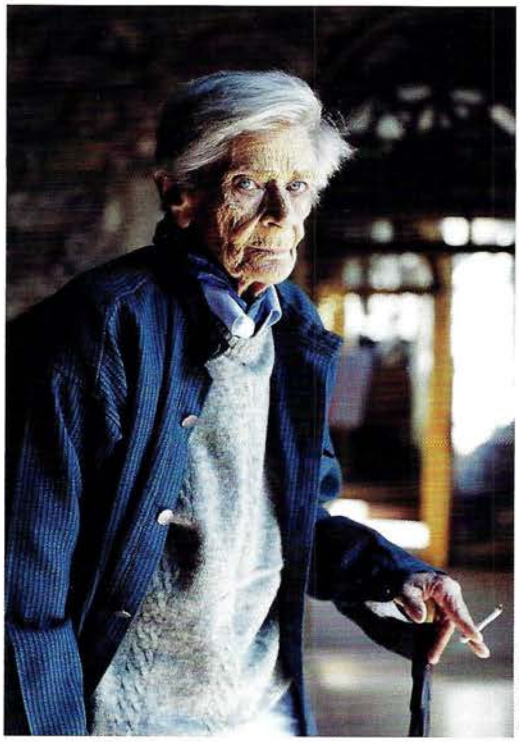
Büyükdere

51 Josephine Powell Kilim Collection

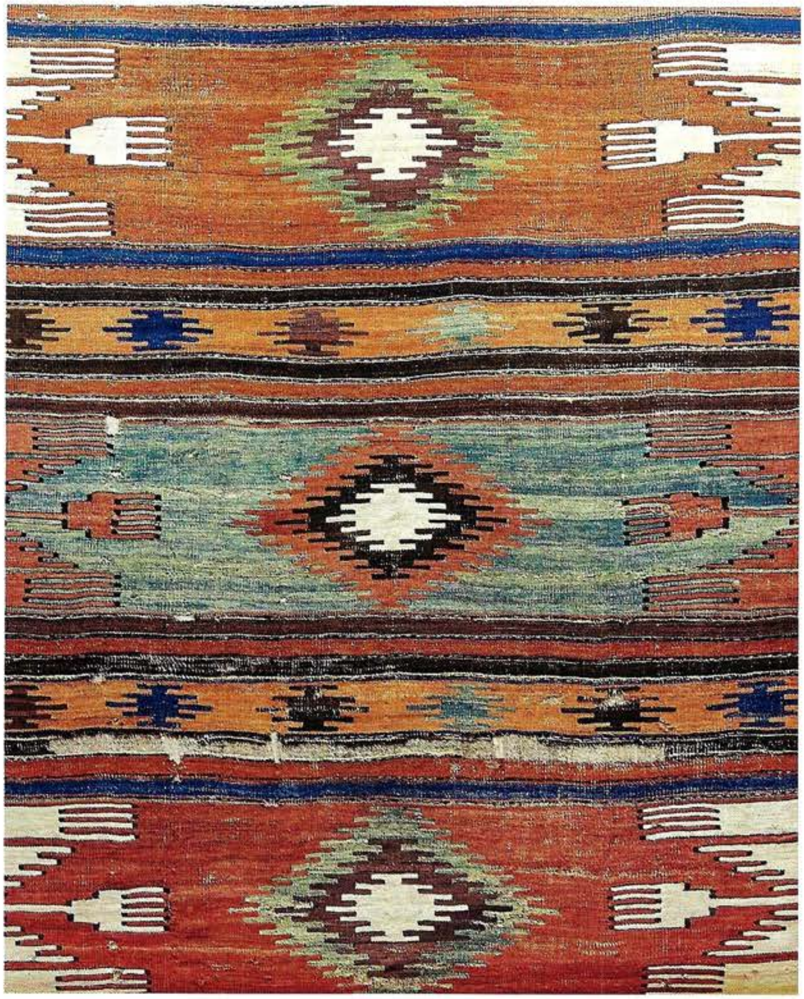
Redoubtable nomad follower, kilim collector, photographer and chain-smoker, Josephine Powell left her precious collection to the Vehbi Koç Foundation, which shows them in the founder's summer house, better known for being the stage set for one of Turkey's corniest soaps, *Aşk-ı memnu* (*Forbidden Love*). Which is why it is surprisingly well attended.

Vehbi Koç Büyükdere Evi
Piyasa Cad 25–29, Sarıyer
Daily 10–5, closed Wed
Metro: Hacıosman
Ferry: Büyükdere or Sarıyer
www.vkv.org.tr

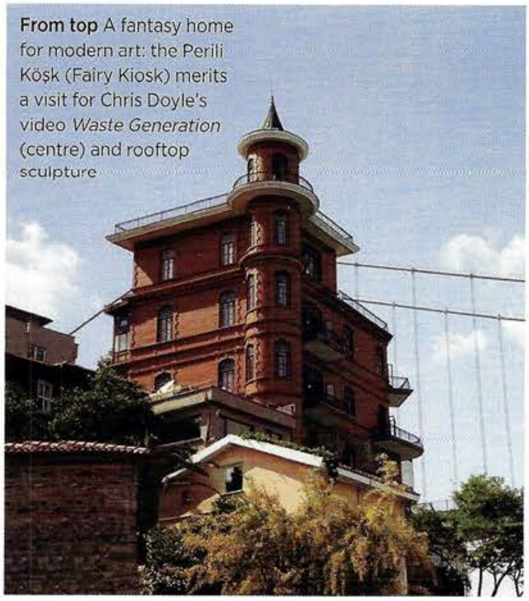
Right A legend in her lifetime: Josephine Powell (1919–2007)
Below A 19th-century Anatolian kilim from Powell's bequest



JÜRGEN FRANK



MONICA FRITZ



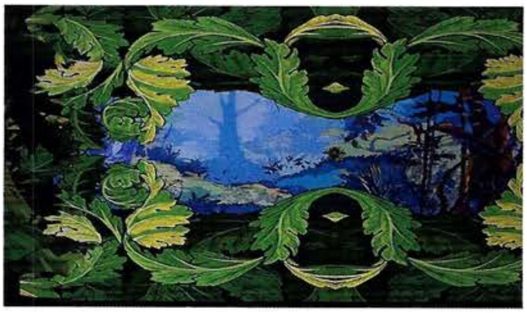
From top A fantasy home for modern art: the Perili Köşk (Fairy Kiosk) merits a visit for Chris Doyle's video *Waste Generation* (centre) and rooftop sculpture

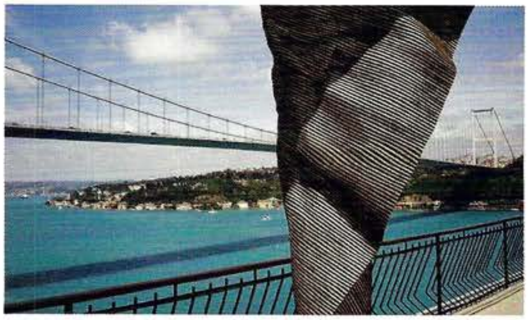
Rumelihisarı

52 Borusan Contemporary

The Borusan corporation keeps its art collection in the Perili Köşk, its turreted red-brick headquarters on the Bosphorus. At weekends employees lock away their personal belongings and it is open to the public. Anonymous shared offices on the lower floors give way to the more personalised offices of senior staff higher up, and to a boardroom with a cartoonishly large bust of the company's founder. The collection is heavy on clean, aesthetically safe photography, such as the high-density urban work of Michael Wolf, but it is hard not to be fascinated by the strangeness of it all. Finally, wander outside the boardroom to enjoy the roof terrace with its breezy Bosphorus views.

Borusan Contemporary
Perili Köşk, Hisar Cad 5,
Rumelihisarı
Sat and Sun 10–7
+90 212 393 5200
borusancontemporary.com





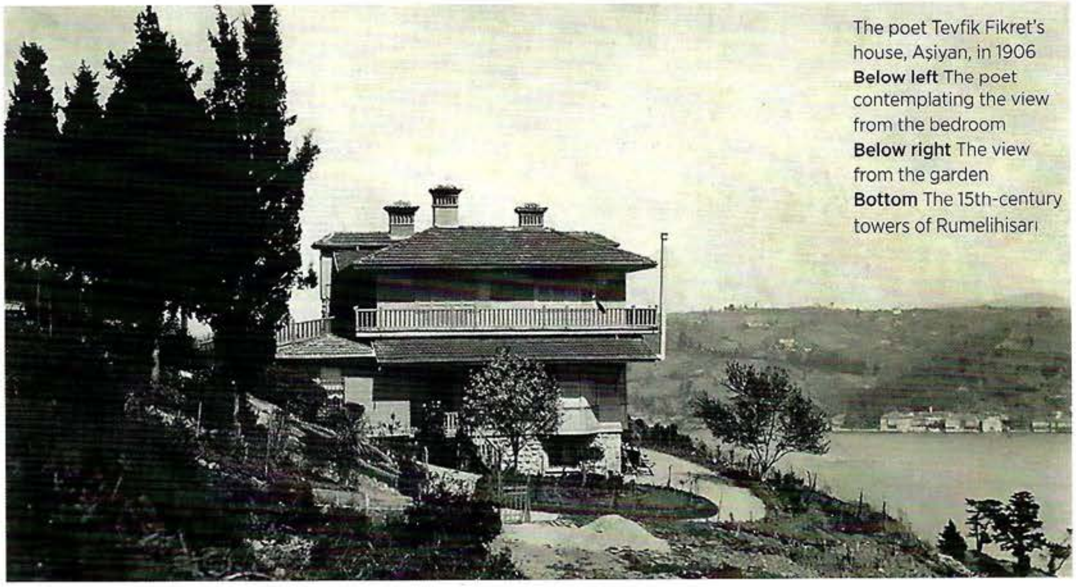
53 Aşiyan Museum

Reached via a steep climb from the shores of the Bosphorus between Bebek and Rumelihisarı, this well-preserved house was built by the poet Tevfik Fikret. Its name, Aşiyan, is Farsi for bird's nest.

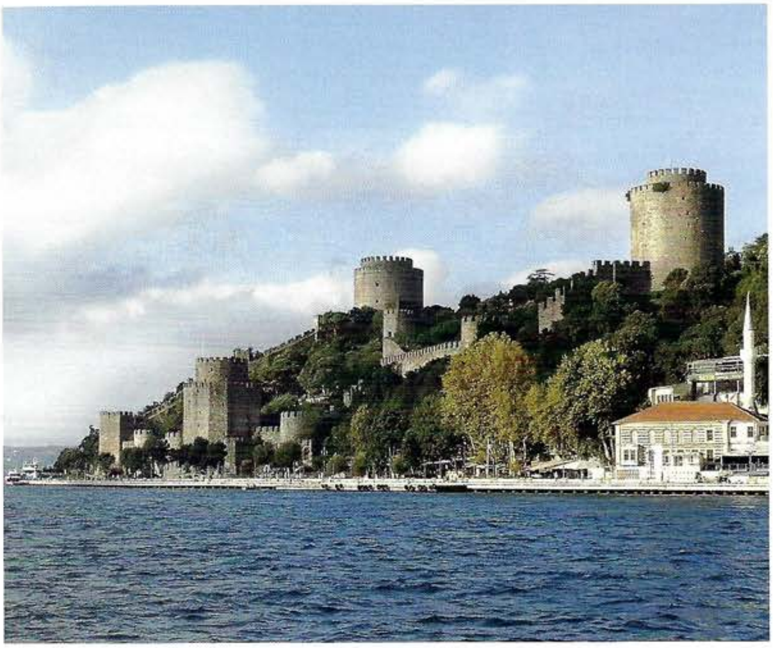
Among the highlights is the last Caliph's painting *Fog*, given to the poet as a companion to his poem of the same name, an extended metaphoric riff on the oppressive political atmosphere of late-Ottoman Istanbul. The long-dead poet's presence lingers in the bedroom where he died, where his deathbed bears a mask sculpted by his friend Mihri Rasim, and the cemetery below offers a Père Lachaise-like concentration of the city's great writers and artists.

The museum's audio guide has only one volume setting, and no earphones are provided, so we suggest you bring your own, or forgo it altogether and leave it all to your imagination.

Aşiyan Müzesi
Aşiyan Yokuşu,
Rumelihisarı, Bebek
Tues–Sun 9–4
Bus stop: Aşiyan, then
a steep 5-min walk
+90 212 263 6986



The poet Tevfik Fikret's house, Aşiyan, in 1906 **Below left** The poet contemplating the view from the bedroom **Below right** The view from the garden **Bottom** The 15th-century towers of Rumelihisarı



54 Rumeli Hisarı

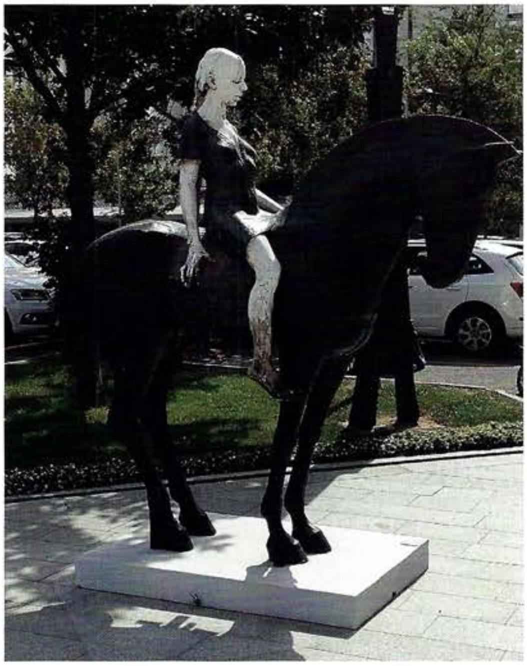
Reputedly built in less than four months in 1452, the European shore's first Ottoman structure remains blessedly unfreighted with patriotic narratives or grand flourishes. While most of its high ramparts are closed to the public, the 18-lira entrance fee still gets you a stimulating, hilly ramble in the castle grounds. Don't miss the Zaganos Pasha tower, where thick vines hanging from the stairs to the battlements lend a gothic flavour.

Rumeli Hisarı Müzesi
Rumelihisarı
April–Sept 9–7,
Oct–March 9–5, closed Wed
hisarlarmuzesi@kultur.gov.tr

55 Bosphorus University Cultural Heritage Museum

One of the attractive New England-style wooden houses sprinkled around the woods of this hilltop campus behind the towers of Rumelihisarı was home to Alexander Van Millingen (1840–1915), whose guidebooks to the city were for a long time the standard works. Much of the house is used for classes, but three rooms have been preserved.

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi
Rumelihisarı
Mon–Fri 10–4, by appt only: for contact details see cornucopia.net/bumuseum
Metro: Boğazici Üniversitesi
Ferry: Bebek or Emirgan, then a 10-min taxi ride



MONICA FRITZ

Top *Female Don Quixote* by Mahmut Aydın (1989), outside the Elgiz Museum
Above The founder, Can Elgiz, with *Big Coat*, by Erwin Wurm (2010)

Maslak
56 Elgiz Museum

Unknown to the broader public but respected by international collectors, the city's oldest non-profit space for contemporary art hides away in a plaza in Maslak. Set up by Sevda and Can Elgiz in 2001 with the help of art-world doyen Vasıf Kortun, it displays temporary exhibitions alongside selections from the founders' personal collection, including art by Tracey Emin, Gilbert & George, Thomas Streuth, Mehmet Gün and Fahrelnissa Zeid.

Every year the museum has an open call and commissions an exhibition's-worth of sculpture to be installed on the roof, from where you'll feel pleasingly dwarfed by the surrounding high-rises.

The Pelit Patisserie on the main drag, and the food court at Orijin Plaza next to the metro are good stops for coffee or a bite after.

Elgiz Museum
Beybi Giz Plaza, Maslak
Wed–Fri 10–5, Sat 10–4,
Tues by appt
Metro: İTÜ-Ayazağa
(Plazalar exit)
+90 212 290 2525
elgizmuseum.org

Maslak
57 Maslak Kasırları

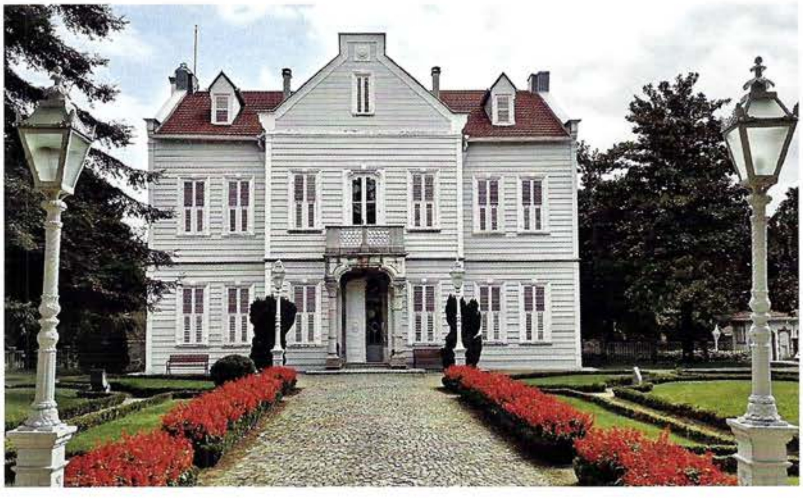
One of the virtues of this unassuming imperial residence is to make you forget you're in Maslak at all. Banished by his uncle from a mansion in Tarabya for being overly fond of sailing and swimming, the Şehzade Abdülhamid, the 19-year-old prince, is said to have devoted his energies here to reading, playing and composing music, breeding sheep and cattle, gardening and studying horticulture.

Livestock aside, evidence of all of this remains at the main house, much helped by an excellent English-language audio guide. From the ancient French camellias in the orangery to the Baroque staircase he designed and built himself, without nails, in the front hall, numerous fine details create an intriguingly personal portrait of the future sultan as a young man. Not to mention that he learnt he was to become sultan in the study upstairs.

Visit in January or February, when the camellias are in full bloom. On a sunny day, stop off for a Turkish coffee outside the Çadır Köşkü at the end of the garden.

Maslak Kasırları
Büyükdere Cad, Maslak
Tues–Sun 9–5
Metro: Atatürk Oto Sanayi
(follow the 'Orduevi' exit)
+90 212 346 1907
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

A world away
A short metro ride from Taksim Square, the Maslak Kasırları, where Abdülhamid II lived as a prince, is a leafy escape from central Istanbul
Left Fountain at the entrance to the hamam in the garden
Below Windows in its many domes light the hamam
Below, centre Famed for its roof-high camellias, the orangery bears Abdülhamid's monogram above the door
Bottom His clapboard residence, built in the 1870s



Yeniköy

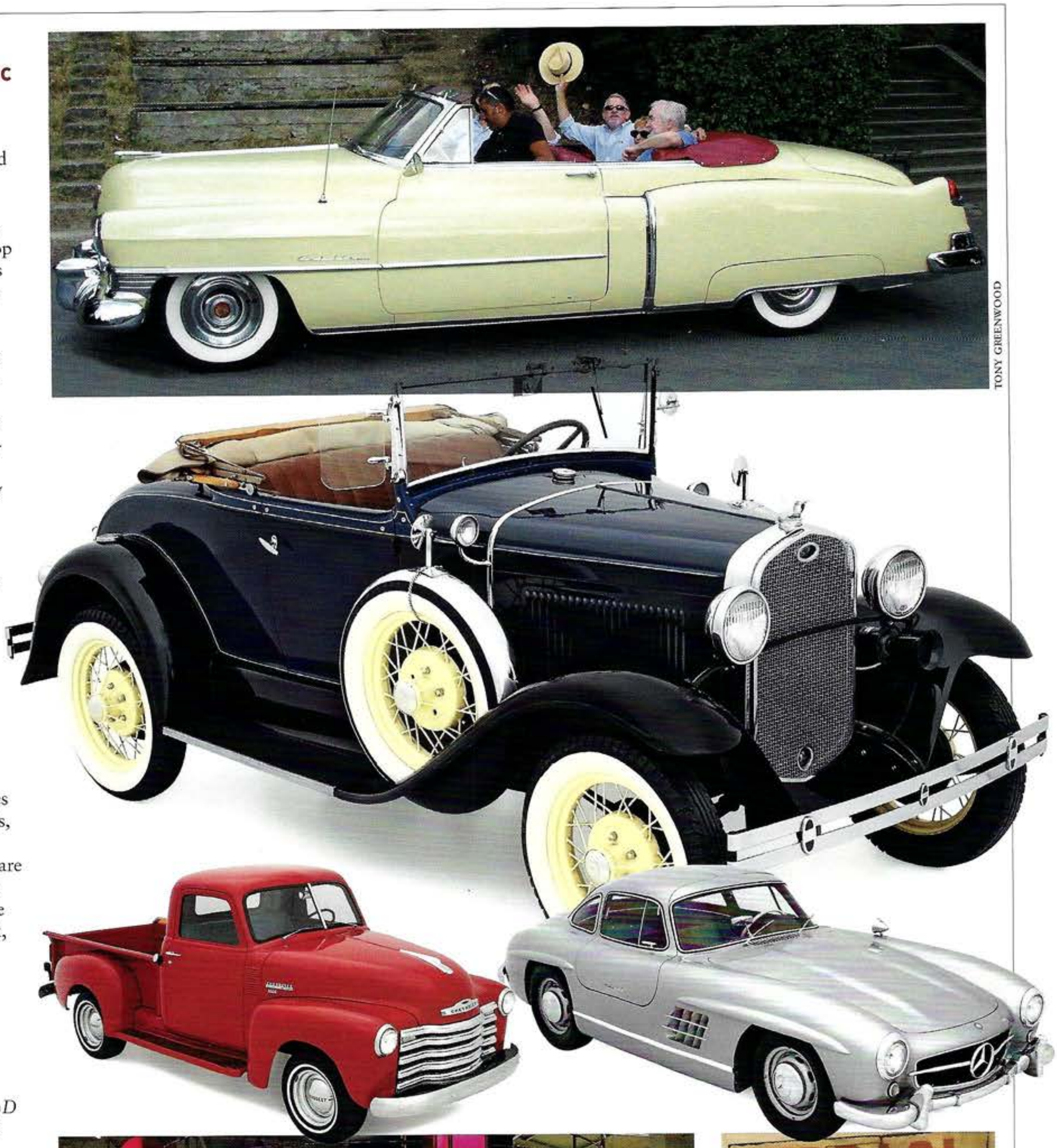
58 Ural Ataman Classic Automobile Museum

A museum devoted to a father and daughter's shared passion for gas guzzlers, Ural and Ayşe Ataman's Brylcreem-slick showroom, hidden in a humdrum hilltop district of Yeniköy, displays some 60 shiny beasts. First up is "the Hot One", the 1959 Chevrolet Impala convertible, which brought in the era-defining tail fins.

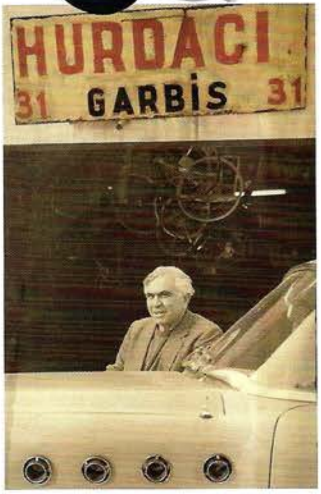
The oldest cars in the collection are Henry Ford's "any-colour-so-long-as-it's-black" 1926 Model T Touring Car and the showy 1931 Model A Deluxe Roadster (right). Parked at the back are a 1955 gullwing Merc and a white 1960 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud II, the last Roller to be "the best car in the world". Three fabulous pickups downstairs could only be driven in ironed dungarees.

A reminder of the toil needed to get this fleet of beautifully restored vehicles in gear is a poster of Garbis, the legendary Istanbul spare-parts man. The cars are ready to roll, including the Cadillac in the photo in the late John Freely's last book, *Stamboul Ghosts* (from cornucopia.net).

Ural Ataman Klasik Otomobil Müzesi
Nuri Paşa Cad 107,
Ferahevler Mah, Yeniköy
Sat only 11–6
Ferry: İstinye, then bus 29D or the Ferahevleri dolmuş (a taxi might be simpler)
Metro: Hacıosman, then taxi
+90 212 299 4539
atamanmuseum.com


TONY GREENWOOD

Above right, from top John Freely, his wife and friends in the museum's 1950 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible Coupe; a 1951 Ford Model A Deluxe Roadster; a red 1950 Chevrolet Half Ton Pickup and a silver 1955 Gullwing Mercedes-Benz 300SL **Right** The museum's classic diner (used for private parties only) **Far right** 'Hurdacı' Garbis, who famously tracked down the parts to restore these wonderful cars

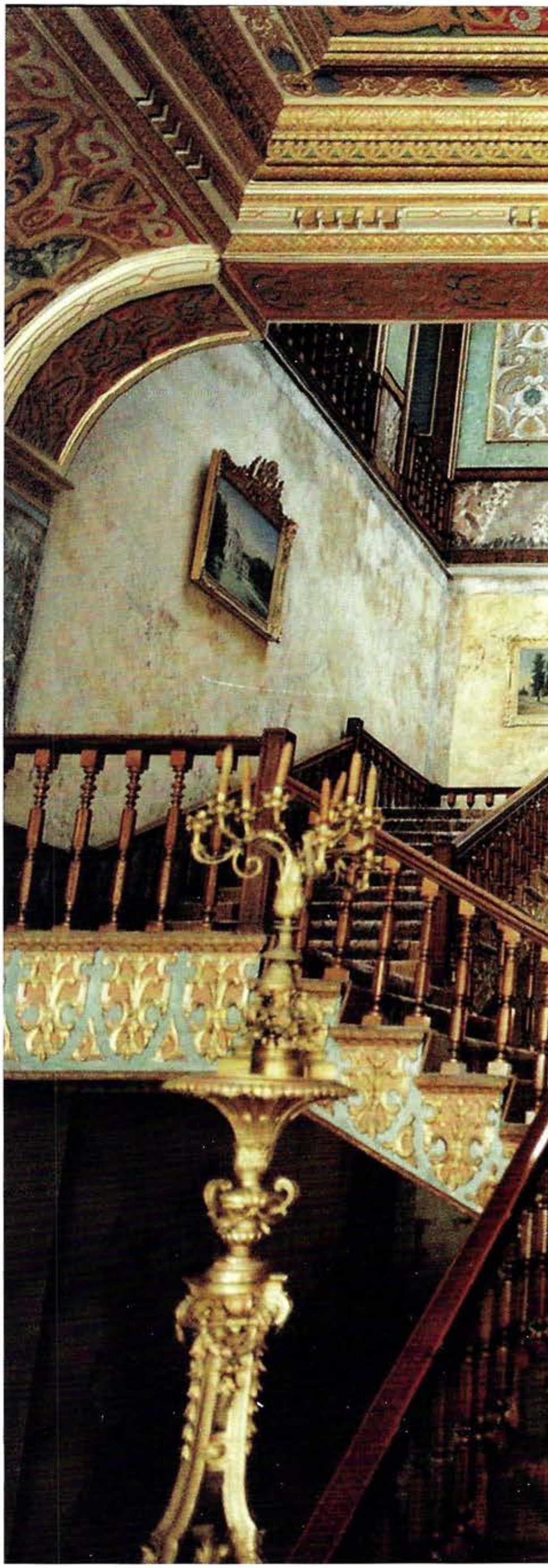


The sultans' summer palaces

19th-century splendour

The private wooden waterside yalıs on the Asian side are little jewel boxes but are not for prying eyes. Three palaces make up for that. Starting with the leviathan Beylerbeyi, we move upstream to the wedding-cake Küçüksu Kasrı and the newly restored Beykoz Kasrı. In between are places to dine and dawdle, from the fish joint İsmet Baba in pretty Kuzguncuk to smart hilltop restaurants

Right Staircase to the *selamlık* (reception rooms). Equally grand is the harem staircase at the other end
Below The door to the harem. A high red wall still divides the garden
Bottom and bottom left Two pinnacled 'sea kiosks' flank the quay. Visitors found Beylerbeyi airier than Dolmabahçe. The Empress Eugénie even had her room's windows copied in the Tuileries

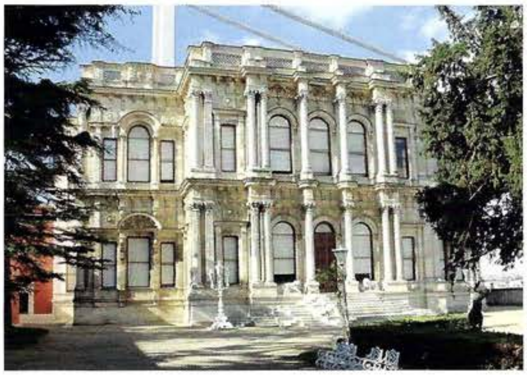


Beylerbeyi

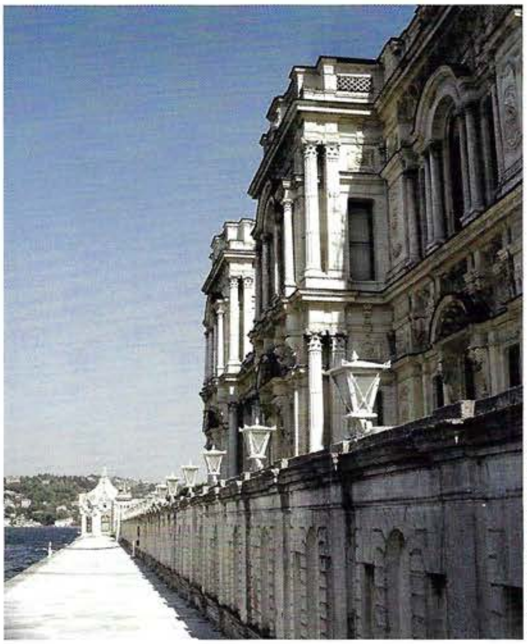
59 Beylerbeyi Palace

A modest servants' door lets you into the grounds of a palace second only to Dolmabahçe in scale. Agreeably free of crowds, the interior will delight lovers of late-Ottoman flamboyance. Note the original reed matting – from Egypt – throughout, the ceiling paintings by Stanisław Chlebowski, and the marquetry in the room used to receive envoys. The Bosphorus Bridge now towers over this splendid pile, finished in 1867, but the garden and waterside café are surprisingly silent.

Beylerbeyi Sarayı
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Beylerbeyi
+90 216 321 9320
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr



BRIAN MCKEE



PHOTOGRAPHS: JÜRGEN FRANK

Anadoluhisarı

60 Küçüksu Kasrı

"Nothing is allowed to rest uncarved," wrote Godfrey Goodwin of the Balyans, the family of builder-architects who built most of the great 19th-century palaces of the Bosphorus. Nikoğos Balyan completed Küçüksu for Abdülmecid in 1857, a year after Ihlamur (p136). It became even more theatrical when Abdülaziz insisted on embellishing the façade.

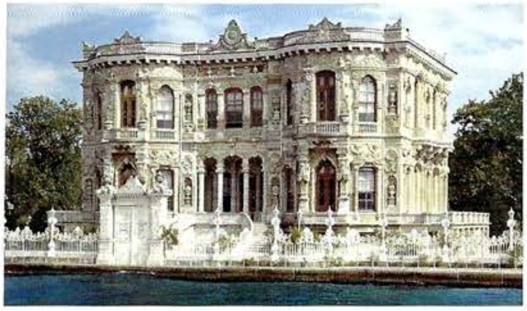
The opulent ceilings are typical of the French set designer Charles Séchan, who arrived in 1851 fresh from his success with the Louvre's Galerie d'Apollon. The Prince of Wales lunched in this pavilion in 1860 and was bowled over.

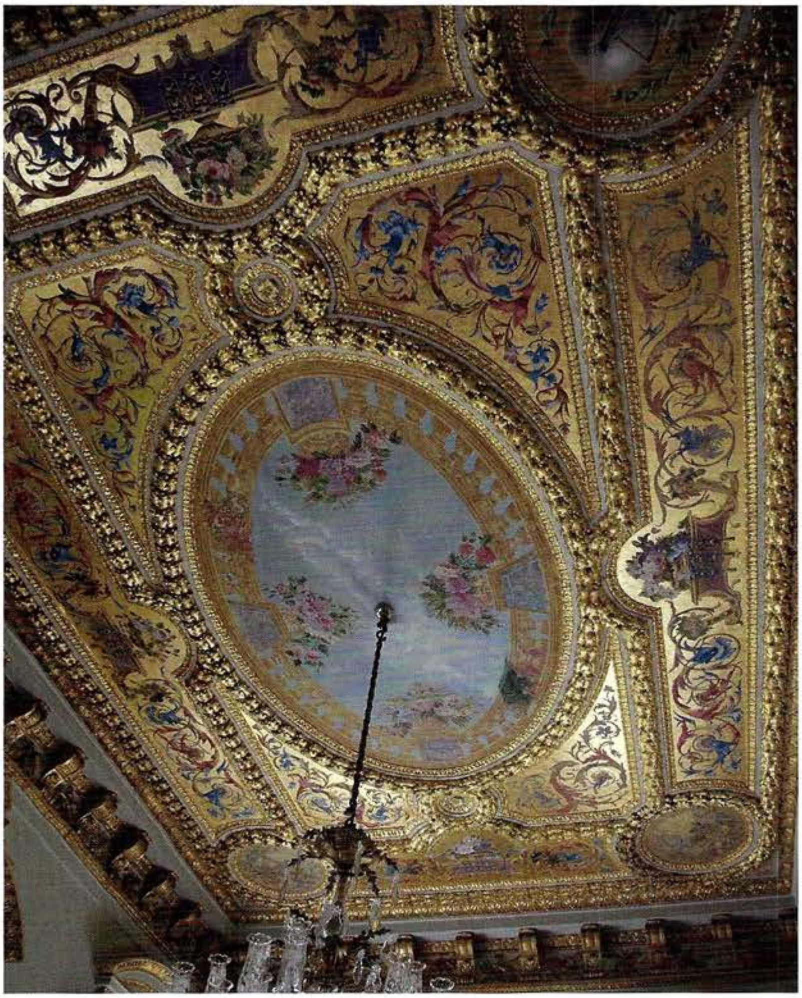
Küçüksu stands on the site of a wooden hunting lodge in the valley of the Sweet Waters of Asia, looking across to the towers of Rumelihisarı on the European shore.

Abdülaziz would arrive by caique. Today, the ferry stops a ten-minute walk away by the 14th-century fortress of Anadoluhisarı.

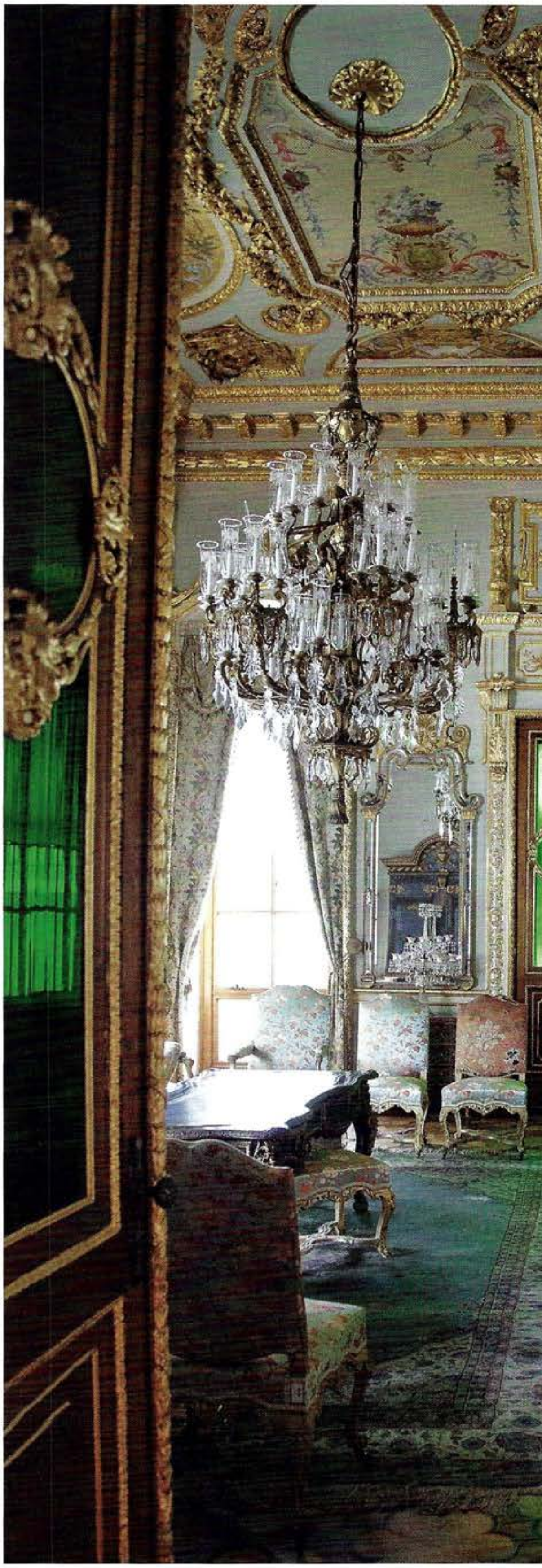
Küçüksu Kasrı
Anadoluhisarı
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Anadoluhisarı
+90 216 332 3303
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

Below Encrusted with carved festoons, urns, niches and barley-sugar columns, the Küçüksu Kasrı lurches perilously at the water's edge
Bottom Charles Séchan brought French flair to the trompe-l'oeil ceilings
Right None of the decoration – emerald-green glazed doors and a splendid chandelier in each of the ten staterooms – has lost its glitter. The Italian marble fireplaces fended off the cold Bosphorus winds





PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



JOHN SCOTT

Beykoz

61 Beykoz Kasrı

The Bosphorus would have been a poorer place without its "Egyptians" – the largely Turkish elite of Cairo and Alexandria who returned each summer to wooden yalıs to escape the heat and dust. It became a veritable Ottoman Riviera.

The Egyptian khedive Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha ordered the summer palace at Beykoz in 1845 as a gift for Abdülmecid. He had nearly usurped the Sultan in 1833, only the appearance of a Russian fleet saving the day. The Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, ending the affair, was signed on this very spot.

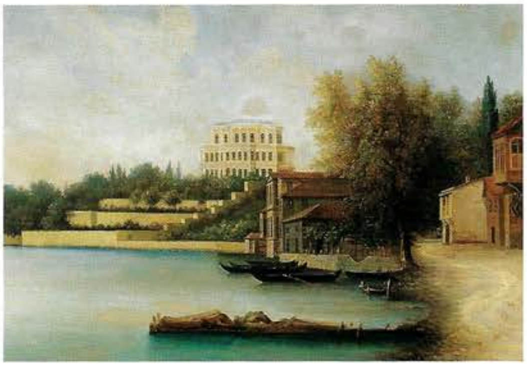
After languishing for decades as a children's hospital – iron beds lining its halls, samovars bubbling away in a scene reminiscent of *Doctor Zhivago* – the palace is now meticulously restored. The architecture and view make up for dull furniture.

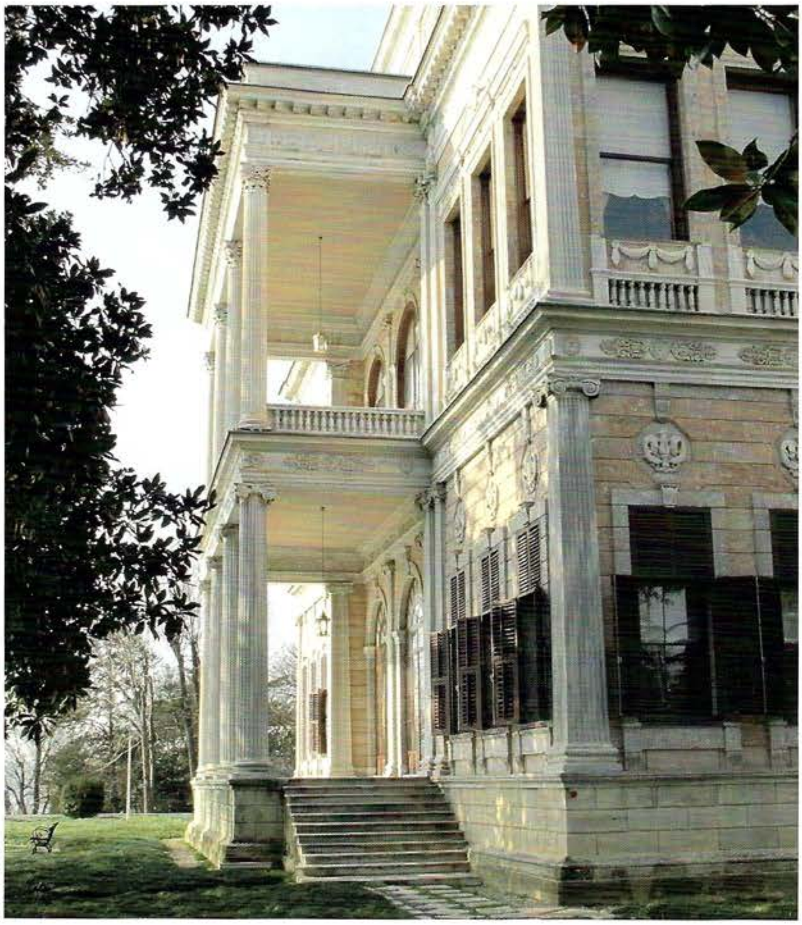
Beykoz is the penultimate stop on the Üsküdar–Anadolukavağı ferry, and a boat crosses to and from Yeniköy every 20 minutes. The palace is a ten-minute walk along a road just recognisable from Tevfik's painting below.

Beykoz Mecidiye Kasrı
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Beykoz
+90 212 236 9000
www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

Below This view of Beykoz Kasrı by Ressam Tevfik Pasha (1819–66) is thought to be one of the earliest Bosphorus landscapes in the Western manner by a Turkish artist. Son of the sultan's chief muezzin, he studied art in Paris as a diplomat. Banished from court after falling for a girl in the harem, he turned to restoring the calligraphy of the Ulu Cami in Bursa

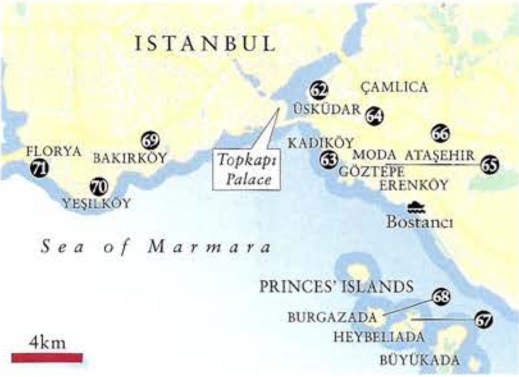
Bottom The summer palace's classical façade. The third storey, out of sight here, serves as a light well



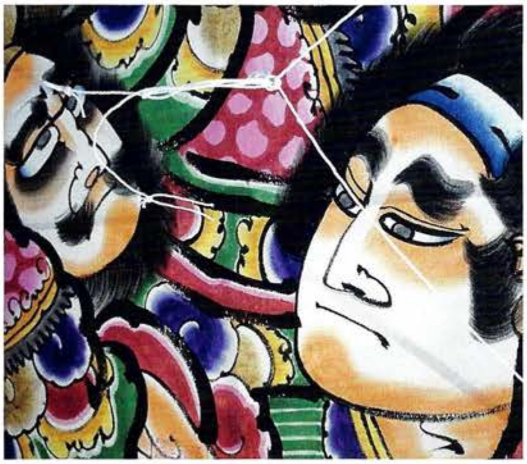


Cultural oases

Few visitors venture beyond the Bosphorus, but amid the urban sprawl of a city growing by a million people every five years are pockets of magical madness



SUSANNA HICKLING



Üsküdar

62 Kite Museum

An extended storefront in an obscure backstreet is filled with colourful kites from all over the world – a delicious surprise. Most impressive are the Far Eastern ones. Its founder, Mehmet Naci Aköz, chairman of the Istanbul Kite Flyers Association, has been a passionate collector since 1986. The museum, opened in 2005, is one of only 18 in the world.

Mehmet Naci Aköz Uçurtma Müzesi
Bakıcı Sok 12, Üsküdar
Mon–Fri 9.30–5,
Sat by appt
+90 216 553 23 37
ucurtmamuzesi.net

Above A Japanese kite, one of 2,500 examples from 33 countries in the Istanbul Kite Museum

BARIŞ MANÇO
SAYAN

Moda

63 Barış Manço House Museum

The older generation may know it as the Whittall mansion after the British Levantine family who lived there, but most Turkish children of the '80s know its address by heart, as the home of singer Barış Manço. Late in his career, Manço hosted a children's television programme, *Whizz Kids*, in which he taught children the Green Cross Code and good manners. At the end of each programme he would read out the address for children to write to: "Barış Manço, Moda 81300" became one of the most famous addresses in Turkey. Nowadays, a visit to the house is an insight into the happy family life of a well-loved musician – he died there in 1999 in his mid-50s – and his extraordinary taste in glass vases, rings and costumes.

Lovingly preserved artefacts such as locks of Manço's hair cut off for his military service, his Steinway, guitars and music awards, feed his fans' love, while rooms such as the *Şövalyeler*, or Knights' Room, in the basement, complete with medieval vaulted ceiling and stained glass, remind you that these were the Seventies. Step into All Saints Church across the street if it is open.

Barış Manço Evi
Yusuf Kâmil Paşa Sok 5,
Moda, Kadıköy
Tues–Sun 9–5
Ferry: Kadıköy, then tram or taxi to Moda İskelesi
+90 216 337 9413
barismanco.kadikoy.bel.tr

Top left Rock legend Barış Manço on a 1971 album cover **Above** Double-bass showcase for his rings and belts. He filled a rescued Victorian house in typically flamboyant style **Left** Manço's musical stairs

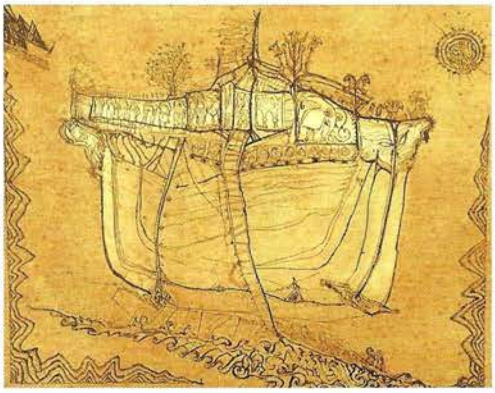
Çamlıca

64 IMOGA (Istanbul Museum of Graphic Arts)

Here's the private collection of graphic artist Süleyman Saim Tekcan, three marvellous storeys of 20th-century, mainly Turkish artists' prints and sculptures, including the ancient machines they were made on. Wander up another flight to meet Professor Tekcan's students and watch them at work.

İstanbul Grafik Sanatlar Müzesi *Keban Cad 20, Ünalan, Üsküdar*
Tues–Sat 9–12, 1–6,
+90 216 472 9296
imoga.org

Below *Noah's Ark*, a charming print by the late Yusuf Katipoğlu



PHOTOGRAPHS: MONICA FRITZ

Göztepe

65 Istanbul Toy Museum

This is a great and totally weird museum. Though it seems out of the way, it's not terribly hard to get to by dolmuş or by metro. Founded by Sunay Akın, an author and poet, in 2005, the collection contains toys from all over the world, but mainly Turkey, Europe and America, from the 1700s to the present day. Rooms are themed; for example, one has "air and space" toys, another toys from the industrial revolution.

İstanbul Oyuncak Müzesi *Dr Zeki Zeren Sok 17, Göztepe*
Tues–Sun 9.30–6
istanbuloyuncakmuzesi.com
+90 216 359 4550/51
Metro (Marmaray): Erenköy, then a 10-minute walk

Left The Istanbul Toy Museum's 1940 Japanese clockwork robot, Atomic Man

Ataşehir

66 Nezahat Göyiğit Botanical Gardens

Several miles inland, in the rapidly burgeoning suburb of Ataşehir, lies the world's most unlikely botanical garden, *writes David Wheeler*. Occupying a 120-acre site that straddles a motorway junction, it is the vision of Nihat Gökyiğit – social entrepreneur, conservationist, and former chairman of the Tekfen group – and a memorial to his late wife. Work began in 1995 on land leased from the Roads Directorate, and the garden now comprises eight themed "islands" linked by tunnels.

The result is an abundance of trees, shrubs, perennials and bulbs that thrive on poor-quality, trampled and churned-over earth, made to bear luscious fruit under the directorship of the botanist Adil Güner. Over some 25 years his team has planted thousands of native and exotic trees in an undulating, man-made landscape that includes ponds, formal gardens and wilderness, strung together by paths and a network of irrigation pipes fed by three deep wells and a reservoir.

One of the themed gardens recreates the Black Sea microclimate – especially the drizzle. Another, planted with 537 cherry trees, commemorates the 537 lives lost when a Turkish frigate sank off the Japanese coast in 1890, and one of its illuminated tunnels houses a spectacular collection of photographs of Ottoman horticultural art.

Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanik Bahçesi *Ataşehir, Kadıköy*
Opens 9.30. Go by car or taxi and check website for closing times and available entrance gate: ngbb.org.tr
+90 216 456 4437

Below Nihat Gökyiğit, father of the world's most unlikely botanical garden
Bottom *Iris reticulata*, a dwarf iris native to Turkey and the Caucasus

PHOTOGRAPHS: BERRIN TOROLSAN

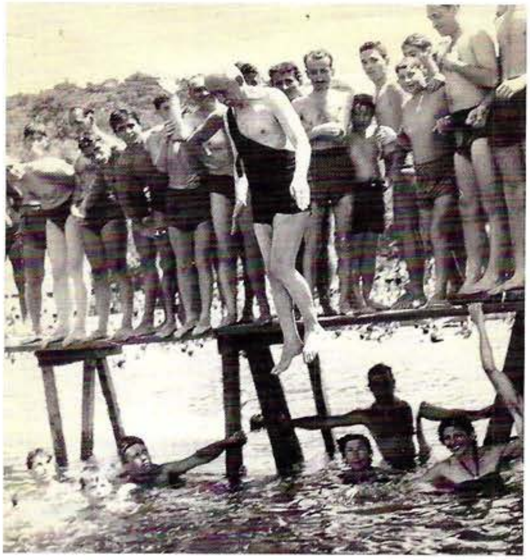
Heybeliada

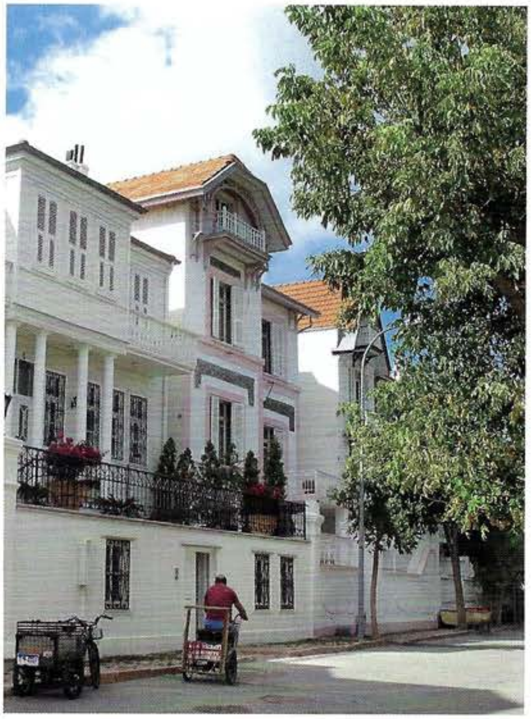
67 İsmet İnönü's House

Apart from the Treaty of Lausanne, İsmet İnönü's greatest feat of negotiation surely came in 1934, when he got the seller of this Greek mansion down from 25,000 lira (furnished) to 9,500 lira (unfurnished).

A short walk uphill from the pier, on Refah Şehitleri Caddesi, the street that circles the island, the museum conjures up an image of one of Turkey's great statesmen spending time away from the limelight, swimming with the locals, dining with his family or finding diversion in a German-language chess magazine.

Turkish speakers can get a well-informed tour from Aynur, the museum manager, whose flawless syntax and courteous manner chime nicely with the house's period features. Her father runs the simple Deniz Cafe, just by the ferry pier, and a mention of Aynur will get you a warm welcome, and maybe even a bowl of soup on the house.





JOHN SCOTT

İsmet İnönü Evi
Refah Şehitleri Cad 67, Heybeliada
Tues–Sun 10–5
Ferry: Heybeliada
+90 216 351 8449
ismetinonu.org.tr

Left İsmet İnönü's summer house (with the pink trim) on Heybeliada, where he avoided the limelight
Above On the ferry with his wife, Mevhibe Hanım
Top Swimming with the locals at the Değirmen Plajı. (Turkey's first mixed-bathing beach). İnönü was famous for his feet-first jump

Burgazada

68 Sait Faik Abasıyanık Museum

The house of one of Turkey's best-loved writers, a collection of whose stories was recently translated as *A Useless Man*, is full of belongings, manuscripts, photographs and letters. It opened to the public in August 1959, five years after Sait Faik's death, and reopened in 2013.

He was born in 1906 in Adapazarı and went to Grenoble to complete his studies, returning to Istanbul in 1934, where he spent winter in Şişli and summer with his mother at their house on Burgaz that they bought in 1938. After he fell ill in 1945, until his death in 1954, he would spend most of the year on the island. Info panels are in Turkish, but QR codes provide text in English.

More modest in furnishings and atmosphere than Aşiyan, Tevfik Fikret's house (p149), the place still has charm, with views from the top floor, where Sait Faik's letters are kept. Be warned: the house is easy to miss on a market day.

Sait Faik Abasıyanık Müzesi
Çayır Sok 15, Burgazada
Wed–Sat 10.30–5
Ferry: Burgazada
+90 216 381 2060
saitfaikmuzesi.org

Below Sait Faik left his house on Burgazada to the Darüşşafaka school for orphans, along with the copyright on his books
Bottom With his dog Arap on the *Hildegarde*, an 1897 Scottish yacht belonging to the Moda Yacht Club. The poet must have stepped aboard on one of its weekend visits to the Princes Islands

BRIAN MCKEE

ARA GÜLER / DOĞUŞ SANAT VE MÜZECILIK AŞ

BERRIN TOROLSAN

Bakırköy

69 Hilmi Nakipoğlu Camera Museum

Museum obsessives and cameraphiles can join photography students, local school tours and lawyers on breaks from the nearby courthouse at this charming collector's museum in Bakırköy. Founded by businessman Hilmi Nakipoğlu in the attic of his school for children with Down's syndrome, it presents some 1,000 cameras in red-felt-upholstered display cases.

With labelling restricted to name, year and origin, the main narrative here is personal: Nakipoğlu family photos sit alongside the cameras that took them, and the exhibition starts with Hilmi's first darkroom, built in his mother's dowry chest. True aficionados could tell you what's missing, but it feels like the whole history of the camera is here: cases of Leicas, handmade Russian cameras, tiny spy cameras, a German-made 1896 studio camera, point-and-shoot digitals and a wonderful list of also-rans, from Argus and Praktina to Mometta, Diax and Kiev.

Those put off by the journey will be pleased to know a move to Balat is mooted; in the meantime, we can only treasure the eccentricity of its current hiding place.

Hilmi Nakipoğlu Fotoğraf Müzesi *Nefus Nakipoğlu Zihinsel Özürlüler Okulu, İncirli Sok 18, Bakırköy*
Mon–Fri 9–5
Metro (Marmaray): Bakırköy
+90 212 543 0920
cameramuseum.com.tr

Top Hilmi Nakipoğlu shows off his 1896 studio camera **Above** Heavy duty: a 1942 Zeiss Ikon Contax and case

Yeşilköy

70 Istanbul Aviation Museum

In the old days, as you studied the outdoor exhibits here, the busy Atatürk International Airport nearby provided low-flying aircraft and jet fumes to bring it all to life. Alas no longer.

While the original wooden airport building is now at the Rami Koç Museum on the Golden Horn, this museum shows a large selection of impressive aircraft. Disappointingly, there is no restaurant on board an old airliner – that old Soviet trope – nor can you get inside most of the aircraft. Instead, visitors can wander past, around and under an F-16, an F-4 Phantom, a C-130 Hercules, a Huey helicopter and a Türk Yıldızları plane, used by Turkey's equivalent of the Red Arrows.

Inside the museum, the history of international flight starts in the 17th century with Hezarefen Ahmet Çelebi, "a Turkish scientist who succeeded in flying the first time ever in history", who was banished by Murad IV to Algeria as a man who knew too much. There are photographs of Atatürk's adopted daughter, Sabiha Gökçen, the first female Turkish pilot, and documentation of the dogfight over Istanbul on October 25, 1918, when the first (and last) air defence of Istanbul took place, against five British planes.

Take a hat in summer, as the outside areas have no shade whatsoever.

İstanbul Havacılık Müzesi
Eski Havaalanı Cad, Yeşilköy
Tues–Fri 9–4, weekends 10–6, closed Mon
Metro (Marmaray): Yeşilköy
+90 212 663 2490
istanbulhavamuze.hvkk.tsk.tr

Below Red-carpet treatment for the Canadair Sabre F-86, a 1950s jet fighter that saw service in the Korean War **Bottom** An Ottoman memorial to pilots killed in the First World War, next to a Douglas C-47A Skytrain, a military transport plane

KNAVIATION.NET

YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ ARCHIVE

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

YAPI KREDI SELAHATTIN GIZ ARCHIVE

Florya

71 Atatürk's Sea Pavilion

Beyond the late lamented Atatürk Airport in Florya, and a few metres out to sea at the end of its own pier, is the spectacularly photogenic Corbusier-inspired Atatürk Sea Pavilion. Built in 1935 by the pioneering modernist Seyfi Arkan, it was here that Mustafa Kemal came in summer to escape the city and gaze out over the Sea of Marmara. For a nominal fee, you can be that week's only visitor and be shown round. Cameras, however, are strictly forbidden.

Atatürk lived here in June and July 1936, using the house for political and scientific meetings, and entertained such notable guests as Edward VIII and "Madame Simpson". He last stayed on May 28, 1938. After his death it was used by a succession of presidents, from İsmet İnönü to Kenan Evren.

Inside, elegant 1930s furniture defers to the unimpaired views, while a few items from Mustafa Kemal's summer wardrobe (a beautiful German bathrobe and belted swimming trunks, copies of which one rather wishes were in the non-existent gift shop) are a reminder of the mansion's function as a holiday retreat.

Sadly, the restaurant and holiday cabins in the garden are restricted to MPs and their families, but the venerable Beyti, Istanbul's finest grill restaurant, is a 15-minute walk away.

Florya Atatürk Deniz Köşkü
Istanbul Cad 23, Florya
Tues–Sun 9–5
Metro (Marmaray): Florya
+90 212 426 5151

Top Stormy sea: two well-dressed ladies pose in front of the Sea Pavilion in the 1950s
Above left The table where a new Turkey was planned
Left Atatürk and Ülkü, his adopted daughter, in 1936

IAAF

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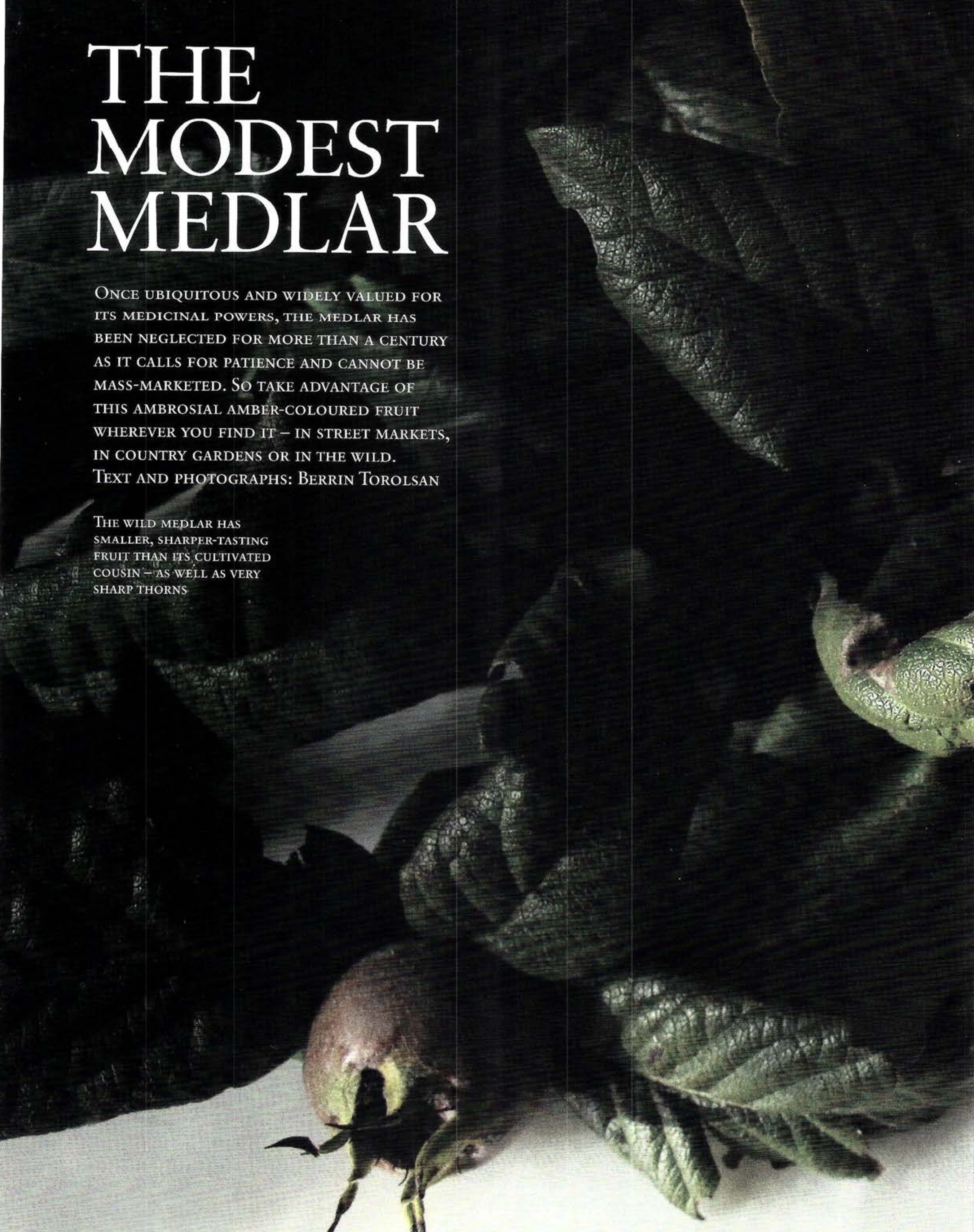
Istanbul Congress Center / ICC Harbiye
www.iaafistanbul.com

An Ottoman aigrette brooch (*hotoz*)
Gold and silver setting, inlaid with app. 40 carat rose cut diamonds. French stamped needle
Early 19th century. Ziva Antiques, Istanbul

THE MODEST MEDLAR

Once ubiquitous and widely valued for its medicinal powers, the medlar has been neglected for more than a century as it calls for patience and cannot be mass-marketed. So take advantage of this ambrosial amber-coloured fruit wherever you find it – in street markets, in country gardens or in the wild.

Text and photographs: Berrin Torolsan



The wild medlar has smaller, sharper-tasting fruit than its cultivated cousin – as well as very sharp thorns

SWEET AND SOUR: PICKLED MEDLARS ARE DELICIOUS WITH ROASTS, COLD MEATS AND PILAV

‘You could scarcely choose a prettier small tree for the garden," wrote Christopher Lloyd, creator of the legendary garden at Great Dixter, in his book *Gardener Cook*. "Its culinary properties might not be a primary reason for wanting one, but it has many other charms. The spreading habit, with branches down to the ground, and the characteristic scaly-barked trunk. Large white flowers are borne, singly in May. In autumn, the leaves never fail to colour to a warm orange-brown, and the fruits, which ripen after leaf fall, are amazingly individual." The tree he refers to is the modest medlar.

Medlars belong to the large Rosaceae family. Their attractive five-petalled, rose-like blooms come out after the leaves of the tree have developed fully in late spring; the single white blooms, which will become a fruit in autumn, look extremely pretty against the dark green foliage. Little wonder that the medlar flower became the heraldic *Geldernische Rose* of the Dukes of Guelders in Germany – like the roses of York and Lancaster in Tudor England.

The tree has been popular since very ancient times, admired by the Hittites, around 1600 BC, and the ancient Greeks. So familiar was the medlar that the geographer and historian Strabo, who was born in Amasya in northern Anatolia in 64BC, used the *mespilon*, as he called the medlar in his *Geographica*, as a point of comparison when assessing the size of gold nuggets in Ethiopia (they were smaller than walnuts, he noted). In the first century AD, the pharmacologist and botanist Dioscorides of Anazarba (near modern Adana) listed the medlar among the medicinal plants he used in *De Materia Medica*, describing it as "like an apple tree" with "a round edible fruit which ripens slowly and has binding qualities". Pliny the Elder, in AD7, refers to three varieties in his encyclopaedic *Natural History*, telling us how they differ in size and flavour. He notes that the leaves turn red before they fall and the tree has very deep roots, which makes it impossible to transplant. The tree adorned the gardens of every Roman villa and was possibly introduced to northern Europe by the Romans.

Besides being a pretty tree, its fruit has powerful anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, which have proved an effective remedy for all kinds of illnesses. An astringent, it helps to stop diarrhoea, and a tisane made with the leaves is believed to stop bleeding. The bark has been used to cure malaria and the pips to eliminate kidney stones. Besides its healing properties, it is rich in nutritional elements including vitamins.

Thanks to its numerous medicinal virtues, this superdrug went on to be treasured in mediaeval times. The medlar was mentioned in 820 in the list of plants for the gardens of the recently founded Abbey of Saint Gall in what is now the Swiss city of St Gallen. Many trees were planted in the monastic gardens of France and Germany that would have been invaluable to apothecaries.

During the Middle Ages and into the 16th century, so many medlars had been planted in Germany that the 18th-century Swedish botanist Linnaeus, the father of plant taxonomy, was convinced that the tree had originated in Teutonic lands and so named it *Mespilus germanica* in his book *Species Plantarum*, in 1753. The Polish botanist Kazimierz Browicz concluded in 1972 that the homeland of the medlar ranged in fact from the southeastern parts of the Balkan peninsula across Anatolia to the Caucasus, Crimea, and possibly further east.

Browicz could have turned for evidence to the 17th-century Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi's monumental ten-volume *Seyyahatname* (Book of Travels). Evliya expresses amazement at the plentifulness of medlars growing alongside wild pears and chestnuts on the skirts of Mount Vitos near Sofia in modern Bulgaria, and he observes them on Crete as well as on the Crimean Peninsula. Tire, close to the Aegean coast of western Anatolia, also had an abundance.

The late-ripening fruit resembles a small apple or large rosehip, not surprisingly, since they both belong to the rose family. In late autumn, as Christopher Lloyd observed, the foliage turns a warm orange or eye-catching umber. After the tree sheds its leaves, the round copper-brown fruit remain exposed on the branches. Usually they are left to be touched by the first frost, which causes them to sweeten like the grapes used to make Eiswein. There is a saying in Samsun on the Black Sea that if it does not snow on medlars, they will not sweeten. Otherwise, medlars are harvested and stored indoors to ripen, a practice known as bletting (from the French to overripen), commonly used with persimmons and certain varieties of pear and quince. There is a very old Turkish verb for this, *göynümek*, so the practice must have ancient roots in Anatolian culture.

Initially the fruit is too hard and astringent to eat. While bletting, it ferments, the acidic tannin dissipates and sugar develops. As a result, the hard flesh softens to give an aromatic balm-like texture.

The author DH Lawrence describes the medlar in his poem *Medlars and Sorb-Apples* as having "something of the same flavour as Syracusan muscat wine or vulgar Marsala". Indeed, these freckly, russet pomes turn into a delicacy. Birds, especially doves, love to pick at them; rabbits, hedgehogs, deer and wild boar all enjoy munching on the fallen fruit, which in turn has helped the resilient, long-living, self-fertilising medlar to spread over large areas of five continents.

Ottoman gardeners, back in its homeland, must have cultivated it to perfection in the course of 500 years, turning wild forms with their thorny branches and small fruit into new varieties with larger, tastier pomes and thornless branches. In the Anatolian countryside both wild and cultivated medlars are known in general as *döngel* or *töngel*, and in some regions, because of the pronounced five calyxes, as *beşbıyık* (five whiskers). In 1502 a decree regulating fruit prices in Bursa assigned different values to different qualities of medlar: the larger, sweeter cultivated forms suitable for the table were named *muşmula*, by then the recognised term for the cultivated medlar.

In the 16th century the Topkapı Palace kitchen accounts record the purchase of 112 *kıyye* (around 140kg) of *muşmula*. A century later, we see 80 *kıyye* (around 100kg), but we don't know if the medlars were used to make preserves or consumed as fresh fruit. However, in the autumn of 1608, in the reign of Ahmet I, accounts for the *helvahane* (the section of the palace kitchen where jellies and jams, as well as helva, were made) record occasions when 25 *kıyye* (32kg) and 35 *kıyye* (45kg) of sugar were purchased to make medlar preserves for the imperial family.

Medlars remained popular for centuries to come. Evliya Çelebi continued to use the word *muşmula*, as did his contemporary the Polish-born courtier and lexicographer Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski, long a resident of Istanbul, who referred to the fruit as "*muśmula*" in his *Linguarum Orientalium*, published in 1680. Today's modern Bulgarian *mushmula*, Polish *myszpula* and Russian *mushmula* all seem to originate from the Ottoman Turkish *muşmula*. Whether that in turn is a borrowing from the demotic Greek *ousmoulia* and *mousmoulo*, or the other way round, is debatable. We leave the question to the etymologists.

In his 1840 memoirs *Three Years in Constantinople*, the journalist Charles White lists "*mosmollah*" alongside cherries and mulberries among the "common" fruits of the city. In the 19th century it was greatly sought after in autumn, the rich russet colour even becoming a shade of luxurious silk fabric.

Today it is less well known. The fruit is a commodity difficult to mass-market, whether unripe or bletted, although the hills and valleys south of the Sea of Marmara and across northwest Anatolia still produce a good crop. Some 5,000 tons of cultivated medlars grown around Çanakkale, Bursa and Samsun are consumed each year.

How to eat them? Well, not very elegantly is the answer, although it is a sensuous experience. Medlars have to be soft to the touch to be ready to eat. Snip off the tiny stalk on top with a knife or your fingers and, holding the calyx at the bottom, peel back the thin, papery skin to reveal the pulp inside and suck it in, discarding calyx leaves and spitting out the five small pips.

Fruit from wild trees is collected and turned into preserves, pickles, vinegar, cider and molasses, prolonging the exquisite taste of autumn through the dark winter.

Personally, like Lawrence, who became addicted to them when he was living in Sicily, I am devoted to medlars. As soon as they appear on market stalls in late autumn, I cannot resist these plump delicacies.

In my childhood there used to be medlar trees in my grandparents' garden by the Land Walls of Istanbul. I would pick the pomes and line them up on the windowsill in the kitchen and wait patiently for them to turn dark brown and soft. My grandmother used to make a kind of cider, *tükenmez*, with unbletted medlars straight from the tree, adding quinces and other autumn windfalls. In the far corner of the larder there was a large oak cask with a wooden tap at the bottom. Like magic it produced an irresistible fizzy drink. I used to be given a glass before going to bed – I felt it was like a reward. The fruity fizziness is a taste I miss to this day.

As one writer warned recently, medlars have so many medicinal ingredients that it won't be long before they are turned into tablets and bottled in smart packages. Before that happens, please run over to a medlar tree, give its trunk a hug, sniff the blooms and enjoy the fruit while you can.

MUŞMULA JÖLESİ
MEDLAR JELLY

Medlars

Sugar

This recipe is from Christopher Lloyd's book *Gardener Cook*. For this jelly, which he describes as "sharp and suitable to go with game and other strong meats", he recommends using nearly-ripe fruit, before it becomes soft.

1 Cut the fruit into quarters, put it in a pan with not quite enough water to cover, and stew gently. Then allow to drip, overnight, through a jelly bag.

2 Measure the juice and allow 500g sugar to 600ml of juice. If the juice is not glutinous, Christopher Lloyd recommends concentrating it by boiling it for a while before adding the sugar. Once the sugar is in, 20 minutes should be sufficient for it to reach setting point.

3 Ladle into small pots and screw on the lids.

MUŞMULA TURŞUSU
PICKLED MEDLAR

1kg medlars (unripe)

Half tablespoon salt

3 tablespoons granulated sugar or honey

10 chickpeas (dried)

1 bay leaf (optional)

This sweet-sour pickle is from Erzurum in the northeast corner of Turkey and, like the *tongel turshu* from neighbouring Georgia, is a popular appetiser: easy to prepare, full of goodness and delicious with roasts, cold meats and rice pilav. A similar pickle is made with honey in Giresun, on the Black Sea, but without the salt – its juice, known as *töngel şerbeti* (medlar sherbet), is served diluted with water as a refreshment, with locally grown hazelnuts.

1 Rinse and trim the calyx and pierce each fruit once or twice with the tip of a knife.

2 Choose a clean jar, add the chickpeas, then pack the medlars in, adding the bay leaf if you are using it. Fill the jar to the brim with water (to establish how much you need).

3 Pour the water into a mixing bowl. Add the salt and sugar (or honey) and mix well, stirring until completely dissolved.

4 Return the liquid to the jar, place a weight on top of the fruit inside the jar, cover and leave to ferment in a dark, cool place. In two weeks the pickle is ready to be served.

RIPE FOR REDISCOVERY: A PROFUSION OF CULTIVATED 'ISTANBUL' MEDLARS GROWING AT THE YALOVA RESEARCH CENTRE ON THE SEA OF MARMARA

Muşmula Marmeladi
Medlar Preserve

1kg medlars (hard or semi-ripe)
3 glasses sugar (about 750g)
Juice of half a lemon

This recipe is from Karacasu, a few miles from ancient Aphrodisias in western Anatolia. Medlars are rich in pectin and this amber preserve with its distinct aromatic, slightly tart flavour goes well with *kaymak*, or clotted cream, at breakfast or with hard cheese at any time.

1 Rinse the medlars and place in a pan. Add water to cover and cook for about 20 minutes, until the fruit disintegrates. Remove from the heat.

2 When it has cooled a little, press the pulp through a sieve into a bowl, including all the cooking liquid. Discard the pips and skin.

3 Transfer to a pan, add the sugar and simmer for 10–20 minutes, stirring from time to time until the preserve thickens.

4 Add the lemon juice, increase the heat and bring to the boil once, then remove from the heat.

5 While still hot, ladle into jars, screw the lids on tight and store in a cool, dark place until needed.

Tükenmez
Medlar Cider

1kg medlars (not too soft)
1 bunch ripe grapes (any variety)
2 quinces
2 or 3 apples
2 pears
1 or 2 tablespoons sugar

Other fruit from the kitchen and unbruised windfalls from the garden can all be added to this cider. It is traditionaly made in special *tükenmez* barrels, with a tap at the bottom, but you can use any large jar. In my childhood, I remember it as a fizzy, hay-coloured beverage, popular with everyone, young or old – a thirst-quenching elixir well worth trying. Any cider consumed is replaced with the same amount of water, hence the name *tükenmez*, or "never-ending".

1 Rinse the fruit and drain. Put the medlars and grapes to one side and chop the rest of the fruit roughly on a board without peeling or deseeding.

2 Pack all the fruit into your chosen vessel. Add sugar, fill with water to cover, and place a lid on top.

3 Store in a cool, dark place to ferment for about a week, until it tastes sweet and slightly fizzy.

4 When you start drinking it, simply replace the amount you take from the vessel with the same amount of water.

Muşmula Sİrkesİ
Medlar Vinegar

About 500g medlars (unripe)
5–6 chickpeas (dried)
Half tablespoon rock salt
1 tablespoon honey
Half glass vinegar (apple cider or wine)

1 Wash the fruit and leave to drain and dry.

2 Fill a jar with medlars, crushing them slightly as you add them.

3 Add the chickpeas, salt, honey and vinegar.

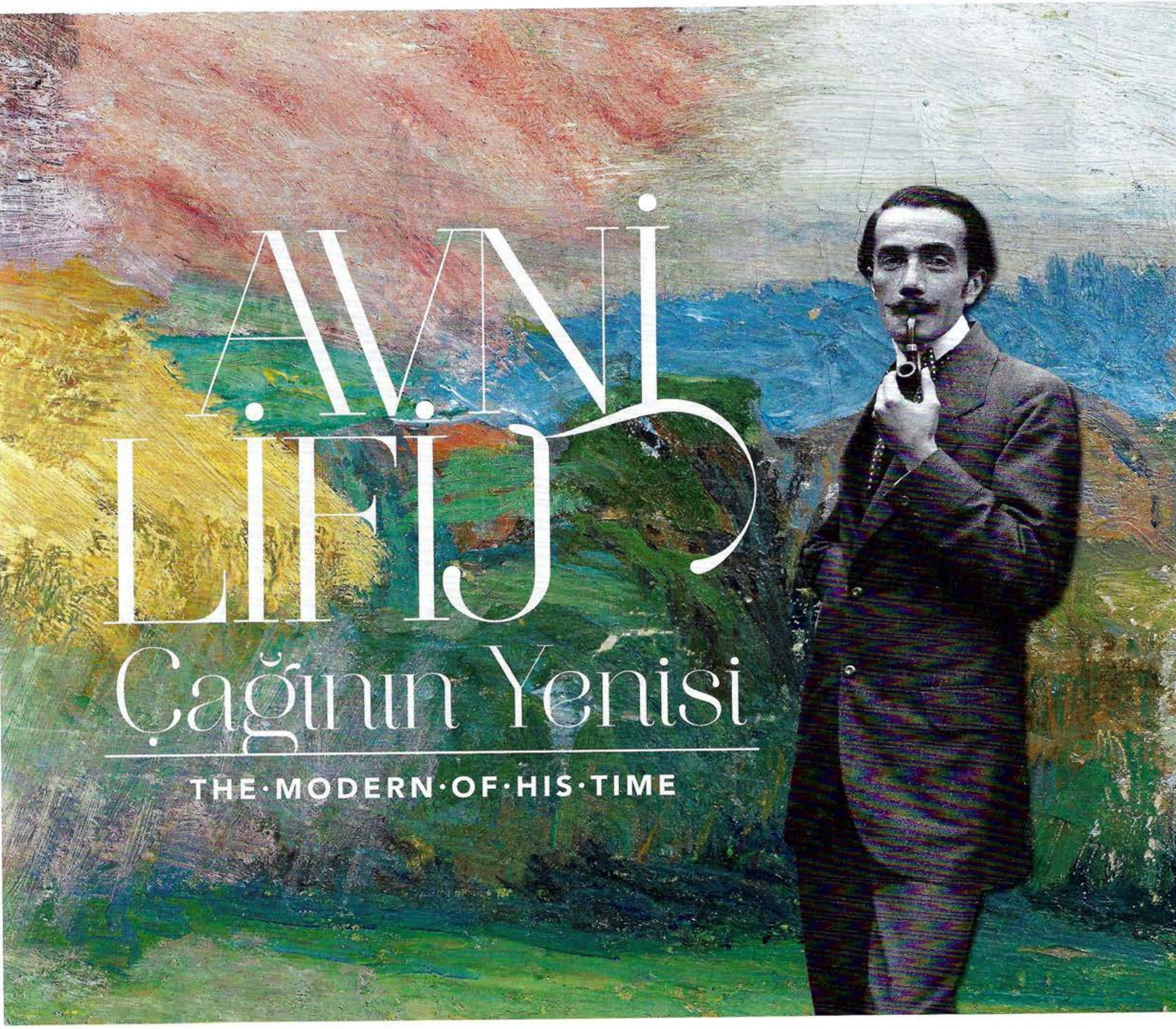
4 Stir daily until an opaque mould develops, then leave undisturbed to ferment.

5 When the vinegar turns acidic, after ten days or so, filter and decant into a bottle and leave to improve further until needed. ◆

Berrin Torolsan, bt@cornucopia.net.
For a full list of cookery articles from past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookery

SABANCI

SSM SABANCI ÜNİVERSİTESİ SAKIP SABANCI MÜZESİ



AVNİ LİFİJ
Çağının Yenisi
THE·MODERN·OF·HIS·TIME

Sakıp Sabancı Museum hosts the new exhibition 'Avni Lifij. The Modern of His Time' featuring for the first time with a holistic approach the artistic identity of Avni Lifij, who embodied the groundbreaking cultural atmosphere in Turkey through his paintings, photographs and essays during the Second Constitutional Monarchy period.

Sakıp Sabancı Museum • 15 October 2019 ~ 12 January 2020

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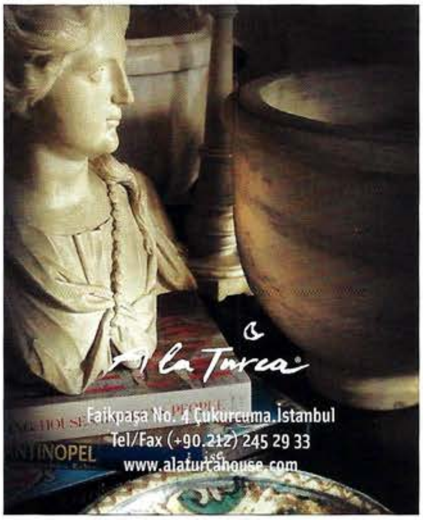
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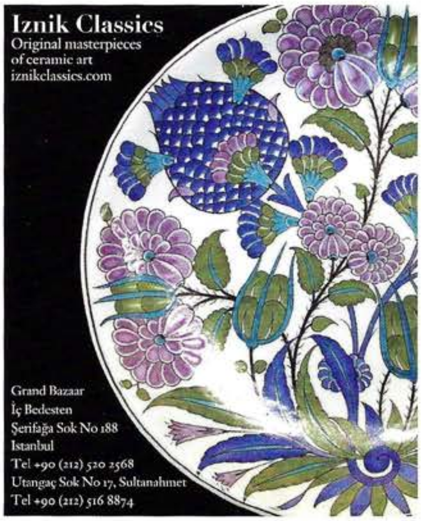
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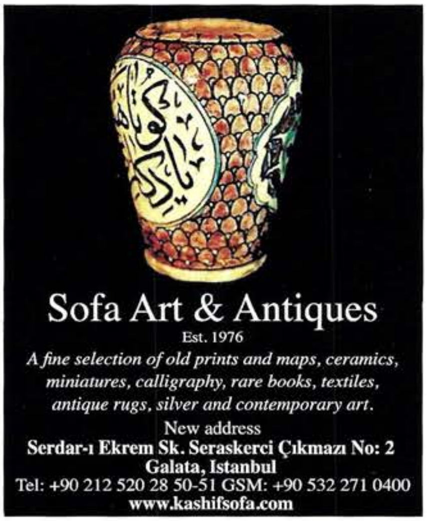
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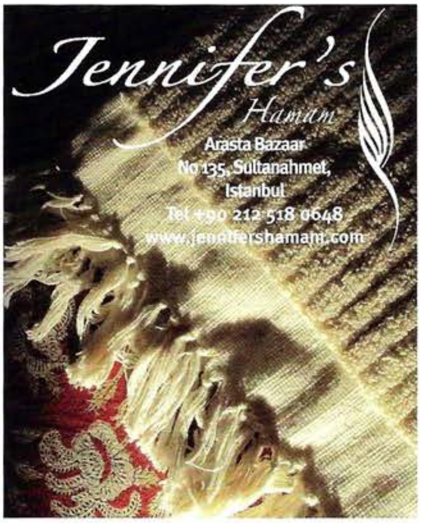
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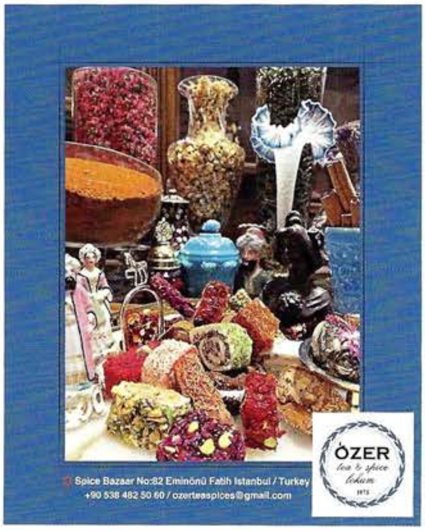
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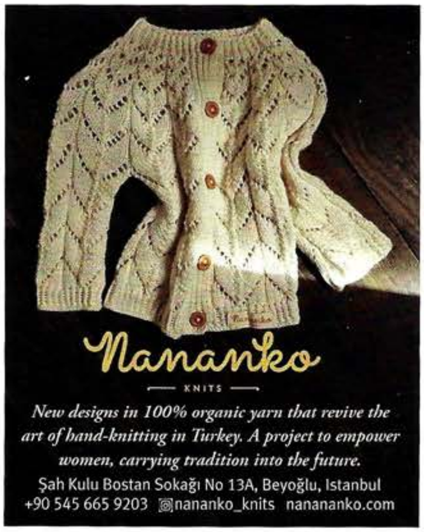
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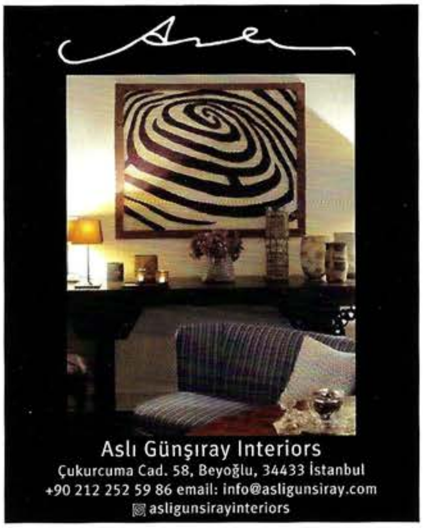

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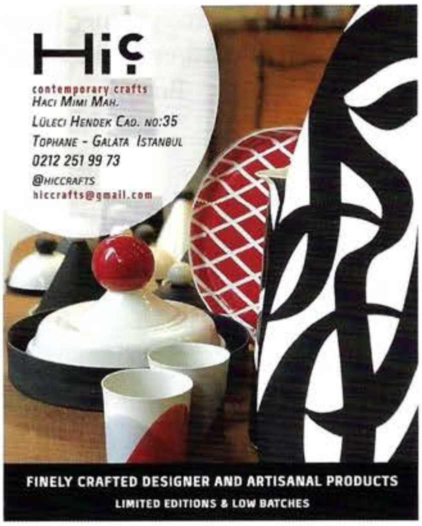

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Do android restaurant critics dream of electric kebabs?

As the world turns greener by the minute, and lab-grown meat invades our plates, Andrew Finkel yearns for one last taste of the real thing. But where to find the perfect kebab?

Peter David was the international editor on *The Economist* in the early 1990s, a soft-spoken, thoughtful man whose death in 2012 at the hands of a careless driver after he became Washington bureau chief, caused me much reflection. I did not so much think of the pleasure of working with him, or of his grasp of foreign policy, as of a chance remark he once made over lunch. I should explain that lunches with editors were the dubious perk of a correspondent on home leave – sausage rolls in a Wapping pub with *The Times*, lavish on the Strand with *Time* magazine. I wrote for two sections of *The Economist*, so had two bites of the proverbial apple, usually at something posing as an Italian restaurant off Jermyn Street. Peter had clearly had his fill of ersatz veal Marsala and decided we would be better off sharing home-made sandwiches on a bench in Green Park. He unwrapped a roast beef on rye as if it were a crystal ball and told me in a matter-of-fact voice that ours would almost certainly be the last generation still able to eat meat.

I knew, even then, about the perilous plumes of methane released by ruminating sheep, and the message has had decades to sink in that protein from beef produces over 1,000 times its weight in greenhouse gases. And yet I still labour to accept that I inhabit a Philip K Dick dystopia of electric sheep, or that the only chop my descendants might ever see will be in a museum. One reason perhaps is that I live in Istanbul, where, despite the greener dining habits of many, kebab remains king. I myself eat meat, but have become more determined to make every bite count. I transplant myself back to that bench in Green Park and ask myself, if I could have just one last kebab, what and where would it be?

I know the answer – but allow me to provide it in a roundabout way. In Istanbul it is still an alien notion to have fish, meat and a vegan alternative on the same menu. With obvious exceptions, you go to a meat restaurant for meat, a fish restaurant for fish and a *lokanta* for vegetables (though chances are there will be a bit of meat swimming in the broth). Of course, a vegetarian could just eat meze, but why bother, unless you're the odd one out in a party of carnivores?

So, my last meat supper would almost certainly be at a dedicated kebab restaurant, and there are only several thousand in Istanbul from which to choose. In this case I am going for the steak, not the sizzle; what's on the plate, not the ambience. And rather than the steak I would opt for a southeastern kebab of hand-chopped lamb (possibly mixed with beef), moulded around a skewer before being placed over the coals. Just as beef consommé was once the standard by which to judge a French kitchen, or a hamburger of an American bar and grill, the perfectly grilled, slightly spicy Adana kebab is the acid test of an open-hearthed *ocakbaşı* restaurant. There should be just enough sheep-tail fat that the meat crisps – which means, in turn, that the fire has to be hot enough to seal it so it does not "boil" in its own moisture, yet not so hot that there is not time for the fat to render. I am no believer in authenticity. The Adana kebabs I have had in Adana are just too fatty, like the greasiest of sausages. And by contrast the kebab I had in Çiya, regarded by some as the Istanbul foodie Mecca, was disappointing – grey with that slightly sour taste that comes from the meat being too lean or cooked at the wrong temperature.

I have grown fond of an Antakya restaurant at the Tünel end of Beyoğlu, **Asmalımescit Dürümcüsü**. There are two sections, sharing the same split-level space, with one entrance on the steps of Nergiz Sokak, the other on Ensiz, the street above. Both rooms are small and usually crowded. Nergiz is remarkable for having a monitor that plays Charlie Chaplin films on a continuous loop, Ensiz for having a liquor licence. The menu is otherwise the same, with good (vegetarian) Antakya-style mezes.

It is a poignant reminder that an essential element of the well-tempered kebab is the bread that it comes with. There was a time when we were impressed by *lavaş*, where the ultra-thin dough was folded over and sealed so that the bread puffed up as it cooked in a brick oven and arrived at the table as a hot-air balloon. The trouble is that *lavaş* bread cools quickly into a bland and doughy blob. The flatbread at Asmalımescit Dürümcüsü, by contrast, arrives flat but is crispy and flavourful and just pliant enough to serve as a utensil to scoop up a piece of the kebab. A *dürüm* is, of course, a type of wrap, and these are of

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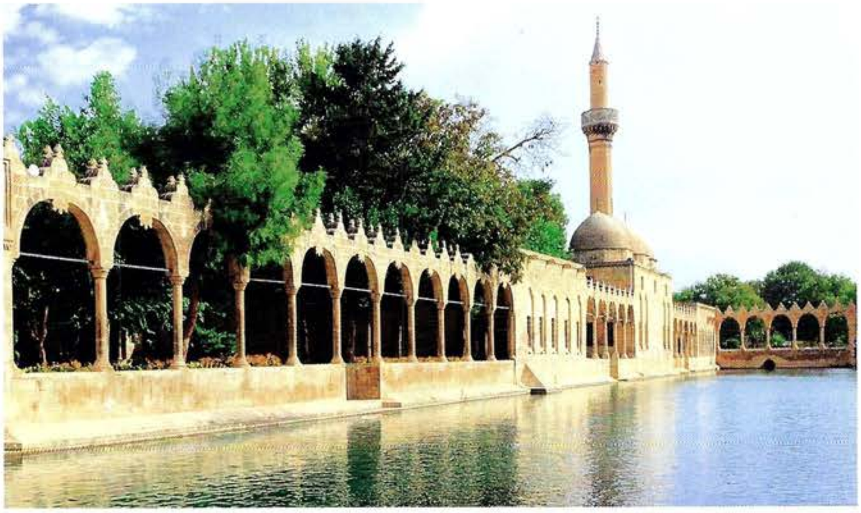

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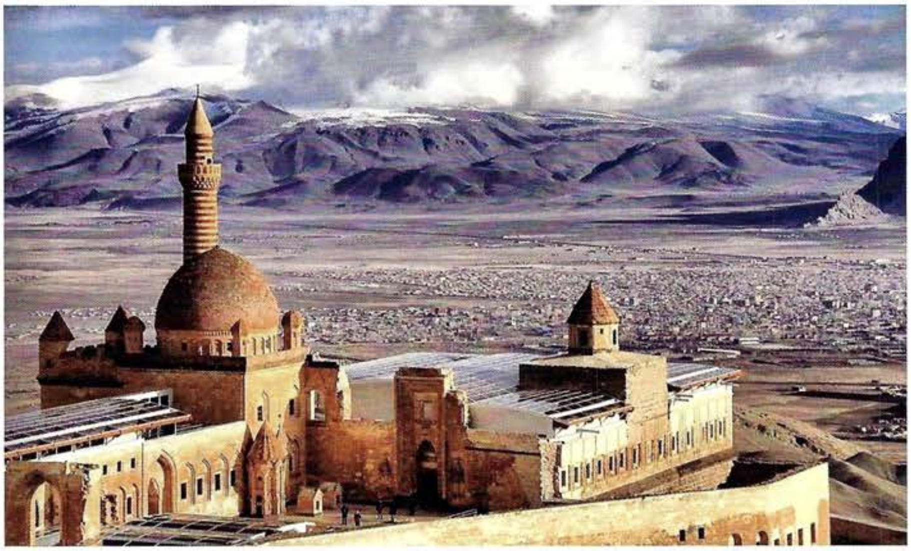

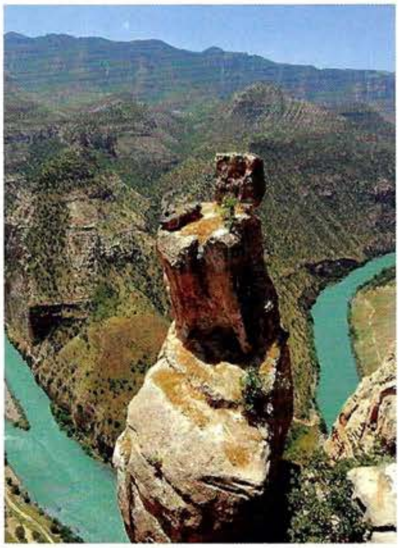

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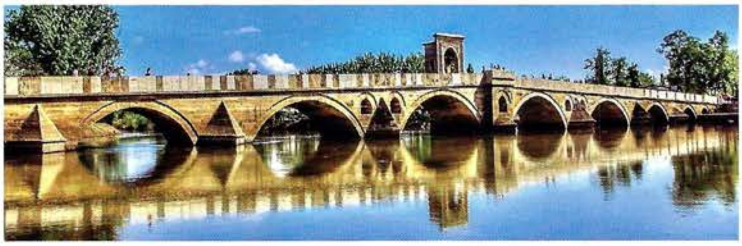

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a superior kind – generous and reasonably priced. The only trouble is that I prefer the grilled chicken here to the lamb, so my quest moves on.

I have reviewed **Hamdi** and **Hanedan** in issues past – these were among the first to introduce Urfa (not Adana) kebabs to Istanbul, where the heat came from the accompanying grilled peppers and not the seasoning in the meat itself. The kebabs, mixed with ground pistachios or poppy seeds or bits of bulgur, were a revelation, full of taste and texture. Hamdi once occupied a sophisticated shack in what is now the square in front of Eminönü's New Mosque, then moved across the street next to the Spice Bazaar and has since become a chain. Hanedan overlooks the ferry station in Beşiktaş. It has been a while since I made the pilgrimage to either and my fear (before I settle down to a life of mung beans and tofu) is that my happy memories of past meals may not be able to compete with reality.

The truth is that the kebabs these two restaurants helped introduce have become commonplace. I could name half a dozen kebab restaurants where I'd happily dine, aware there will always be a half a dozen more. So for my last supper I did my best to discover somewhere new and revelatory. There are two meat restaurants above the hardware wholesalers near the quayside in Karaköy. Though unprepossessing at street level, the dining rooms enjoy sweeping views of the Old City across the Golden Horn. There was certainly nothing wrong with the *zırh* kebab at the newly opened **Rakofoli** – the Adana equivalent taking its name from the blade used to chop the meat. I was on my own, which, along with the blue neon lighting and the scattered tourists at the other tables, may explain why for me it had an antiseptic feel. Not quite the place for my last supper. Nearby **Ali Ocakbaşı** is certainly livelier, even noisy, with good meze, including a hot dish of roasted aubergine, garlic and shallots. The meat was tasty, if not cheap. Yet I longed for something more.

Pala Ocakbaşı, by contrast, is somewhere I felt at home – bright and brash, on an upper floor on a Beyoğlu side street, with pretensions no greater than that of a 1970s lunch counter. Pala is not a place to eat meze – apart from the aubergine and *ezme* (chopped onion and tomato, flavoured with pepper and soured molasses); far better an entrée of grilled bits of meat, liver and sweetbreads. The house kebab is fabulously meaty although oddly just too salty. I was told this was the fault of the new dried pepper they used, which itself contained salt. Quite by chance I was taken to Pala a week later and the problem was solved. And I was sufficiently perverse to drink with my rakı copious quantities of *şalgam suyu* (a red-carrot-pickle juice), which is itself pretty salty. We were a big party and shared one of those kebabs cooked on a skewer the length of the table. Perfection? Well, two problems remain. First, the restaurant allows smokers, albeit near the windows. Second, that it is such an agreeable place I was more than prepared to overlook its other faults. My fear is if I were to go again, I would go again and then again and might never embrace the meatless life.

I will cut to the chase: I first discovered **Adana İl Sınırı**, or **AİS** (meaning Adana Provincial Boundary), when it moved into the vacated Taksim premises of a favourite Japanese restaurant. From there it moved to the less touristy, more yuppified neighbourhood of Cihangir. Forever peripatetic, it has moved yet again – this time way upmarket. Now it resides where the élite used to meet in what was the Park Şamdan in Nişantaşı. Whereas Şamdan adopted the slightly snooty elegance of a private club, AİS is brash and noisy. And because most of the restaurant is a semi-enclosed gazebo, there is only one room where you can escape the smoke. The result is a disimprovement on its two previous incarnations. And yet… the Adana kebab is remarkable.

In the starred restaurants of Europe they refer to food "structures" – usually vertical towers of carefully arranged bits of protein with dangling chanterelles. The kebab here is an equally impressive bit of food architecture, albeit horizontal – rounder and thicker than your average kebab, and the mince slightly coarser. There is nothing to interfere with the taste of the meat except red pepper flakes. The meat holds together long enough to crumble in your mouth – an elegant mix of crisp and succulent.

I am not in love with AİS. Indeed, I got off to a bad start on my way in through the garden as I stumbled in the dark, went flying, knocked a flowerpot off its base, did a pirouette and landed mildly gracefully on another plinth. But this is all to the good. I had my kebab. It tasted of greatness and now it is time to move on. ◆

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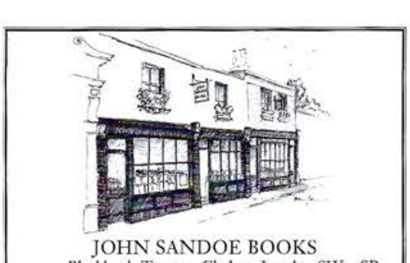

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Apples and pears, passion and poetry

Letters from Central Asia, where Caroline Eden takes tea in Tajikistan, and from Anatolia, where Roger Norman recalls the life and work of the poet, traveller and diplomat Georgios Seferis

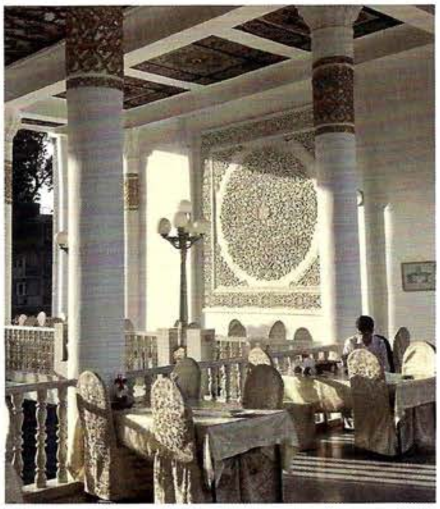
CENTRAL ASIA

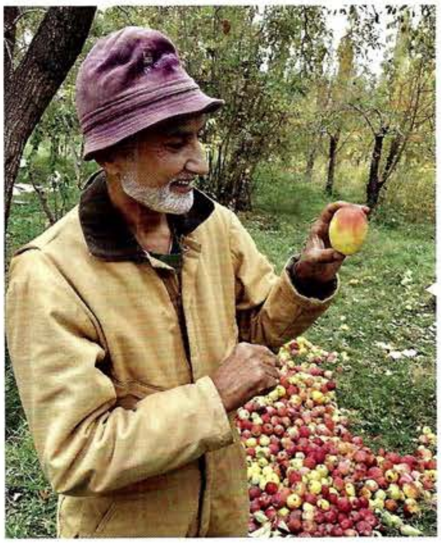
A taste of Tajikistan

CAROLINE EDEN VISITS THE CAPITAL DUSHANBE, WHERE THE GRAND ROKHAT TEAHOUSE SURVIVES IN STYLE, AND SAMPLES THE DRAMATIC RASHT VALLEY'S ABUNDANCE OF FRUIT AND HONEY

Instantly recognisable, the theme song from the 1990s cult television series *Twin Peaks* drifted out of Rokhat teahouse on Rudaki Avenue in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. To me, as a fan of the show, the song offered an unexpected flashback to the eerie world of David Lynch's Pacific Northwest, while also providing the perfect soundtrack to the drowsy slow-trade hour of 3pm that follows a busy lunchtime service. Slumped on tables, waiters dozed on their white-shirted arms under the fabulous Persian-style painted roof, exhausted from serving bowls of *laghman*, baskets of bread and hundreds of teapots. Watery late-autumn sunlight flooded the giant dining hall.

Open-fronted, tall as a four-storey apartment building, and supported by wide white columns, Rokhat is a famous symbol of the city, but it is also a survivor, one of only a handful of protected buildings in Dushanbe assigned cultural-significance status. Opened in 1958, and designed by architects adept at combining Eastern comfort with Soviet brute magnitude, the *chaikhana* (teahouse) looks, and feels, as cinematic and sentimental as that supernatural-sounding song.





MIRZOSHOH AKOBIROV AND THE FRUITS OF HIS LABOUR IN HIS ORCHARD IN THE RASHT VALLEY
BELOW THE ROKHAT TEAHOUSE IN DUSHANBE

Countless Soviet-era structures have been flattened in this small city, known as Stalinabad from 1929 to 1961, a time when Russian-speaking engineers, architects and industrialists worked here, at the far edge of the Soviet Union. Gone is the Jami cinema, named after the Sufi writer Nur ad-Din Abd ar-Rahman Jami, and gone, too, is the old Mayakovsky Theatre, once home to Tajikistan's first cinema and its first radio broadcasting centre. Rare protests erupted when it was torn down in 2016.

Dusty construction sites edge most of Dushanbe's major roads, yet many of the newest and glitziest apartment blocks and office buildings, such as Dushanbe Plaza, a 22-storey monolithic wedding-cake construction, are empty or only partly inhabited. Witnessing this building boom, taking place in the name of urban renewal, brings to mind the forceful, and slightly ominous, words inscribed on Tamerlane's Ak Sarai in Shakhrisabz, Uzbekistan: "Those who doubt our power, see our buildings."

Yet despite the changes, Rudaki Avenue, named after the 10th-century poet Rudaki, a founder of classical Persian literature who served as a court poet to the Samanid ruler Nasr II in Bukhara, remains one of the most impressive and handsome streets in Central Asia, with its trees, statues and parks. It is a physical reminder, too, of Tajikistan's links to Persia, and such connections have not been forgotten – many Tajiks can quote Omar Khayyam and the poetry of Ferdowsi. Along with the Koran, books of Rudaki's poems remain the most purchased and read.

One of the most controversial and talked-about changes to take place here was the closure of Shahmansur market, or Green Bazaar, close to Rudaki Avenue. I have only vague memories of visiting in 2009 but wandering through the sparsely populated lanes in the replacement bazaar, Mehrgon, I wondered what had been gained by knocking it down. Mehrgon felt more mall than bustling Central Asian market. It was only a fellowship of honey-sellers, pitched outside with their beautiful displays of amber-hued jars and wooden honeycomb frames, that brought real life and enthusiasm to the scene. They were, they explained, in town for three days to introduce their exceptionally fresh and grassy-tasting honey, from the mountains of the Rasht Valley, to the residents of Dushanbe.

Autumn is harvest time in Tajikistan, and the Rasht Valley, where the honey-sellers hailed from, is a region wildly abundant with fruit. I travelled there, for four hours, along dusty mountain roads, all switchbacks and blind corners, in a car with a cracked windscreen and little suspension. On one bend, the driver, as charming as he was careful, expertly avoided a rockfall from a steep hillside which left passengers ahead visibly shaken. Yet the views, of light blue lakes, sharp escarpments and dun-coloured mountainsides, were nothing short of spectacular. Such is travel in Tajikistan.

Given the roads, it was a relief to arrive at the botanist Mirzoshoh Akobirov's orchard in Jafr. High above the red, gold and green leaves littering the ground, men were up ladders collecting apples while women huddled under a wooden pagoda, topped by curved Marco Polo sheep horns, sorting and boxing the fruit ready for sale in the capital. At 1,400 metres it was already cold and soon there would be a metre of snow in the valleys. Tajikistan's landmass is 93 per cent mountain, but here the lowlands are wide, with ample room to grow fruit trees.

Under one particularly abundant tree, where a cidery smell lifted up from the ground, Mirzoshoh handed me an apple to taste. Its skin was covered with red and green stripes so perfect they looked as though they had been pencilled on. "You can only eat this apple here. I went to a small forest not far away, found a rare tree, all on its own, and I took cuttings. It had no

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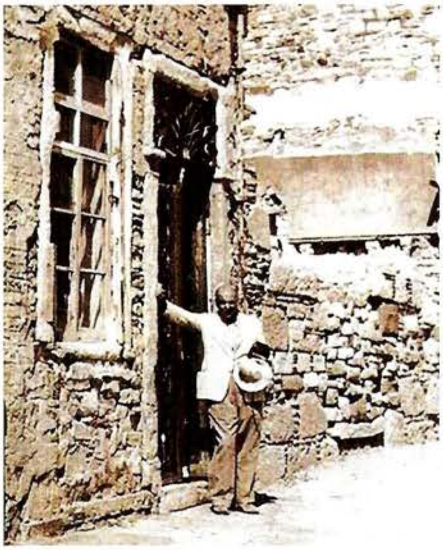
recorded name, so I named it after my father." A winter variety, Iskander apples are the last in the season to be harvested. Other varieties that grow in the orchard are Golden Delight and Ruxhora apples, red as blushing cheeks. Now, people come here to collect cuttings in order to grow their own Iskander trees, Mirzoshoh explained. An exceptionally talented botanist, just this year he was awarded the title First Gardener of Tajikistan by the Minister of Agriculture. One tree he is especially proud of has six different types of apple grafted onto it, all red and all seasonal, each picked at different times of the year.

As we chatted, his sons set up a glorious garden *dastarkhan* for lunch. Honeycomb from the garden first, then *golubsti* (stuffed cabbage leaves with lamb), barley soup and tomato salad. But it was the Garm pear I'll always remember, which in true Mirzoshoh style is grown nowhere else. Grainy and small, it was hard but extremely sweet and juicy, and exceptionally crisp. Its flesh was pure white, the same colour as the fresh snow draped over the peaks of the Peter the First Range that hovered in the distance. A sure sign that winter was on its way.
Caroline Eden, cedentravels@gmail.com

ANATOLIA

A poet's journey

ROGER NORMAN RECALLS THE SIMPLE TRUTHS REVEALED IN THE POETRY AND LIFE OF GEORGIOS SEFERIS, PICTURED AT THE HOUSE IN URLA WHERE HE WAS BORN



Just recently I came across a copy of Giorgos Seferis's account of his first visits to Cappadocia in the 1950s, and here was the poet and traveller doing what he liked best to do – making journeys and poems, observing the art of the old churches with a close, affectionate, committed eye. The book brought to mind the life and work of a native of Smyrna (Izmir) who regarded himself as much Anatolian as purely Greek.

Remarkably, to me, it is nearly 50 years since he died, but then he was born in the year 1900 and belonged to a previous generation. Poets have a different way of ageing, I suspect, because of the extraordinary freshness that the best poems have about them, as if they had been written right now, a moment before you read them. This may be especially true of short, enigmatic poems, such as Seferis's *Denial*:

> On the secret seashore
> white like a pigeon
> we thirsted at noon:
> but the water was brackish.
>
> On the golden sand
> we wrote her name;
> but the sea-breeze blew
> and the writing vanished.
>
> With what spirit, what heart,
> what desire and passion
> we lived our life. A mistake!
> So we changed our life.

These lines became an anthem of resistance to the regime and were sung aloud by thousands at Seferis's funeral, at which time the military government was still going strong. The heart of the poem lies in its last line, though I'm not sure the translation quoted above quite catches the sense of it. "We mistook our own life and changed it" might be better. But the sense was understood with perfect clarity by the colonels, who were themselves the mistake and would pay for it three years later, thrown out, disgraced and never likely to be redeemed by any side, ever. Seferis went into voluntary seclusion and many of his poems were banned, including the versions set to music by Mikis Theodorakis. In his 1969 statement against the junta, Seferis commented: "We have all learned, we all know, that in dictatorial regimes the beginning may seem easy, yet tragedy awaits, inescapably, at the end. It is this tragic ending that consciously or unconsciously torments us, as in the ancient choruses of Aeschylus."

My own close relations with Greece, its people and its history began just at that time, and Seferis was the first of three great poets – with Cavafy and Elytis – who forged my idea of what Greek poetry was and what it meant. I remember being shocked above all by one quality of those poems, namely sincerity. It seems too simple a word but coming from a background of English and American poetry of that era, so subtle and sophisticated, so various and so self-conscious, I was blown away by the ability of the Greeks to express simple, sincere truths (about love, about politics, about history, about the life of the sea). With what spirit, what heart, what desire and passion they lived their lives and wrote their words!

Seferis was a scholar, a historian, a philosopher... as well as the Greek ambassador in London for four years. He was a serious, cultivated, thoughtful person, very far (it must be said) from being a Dylan Thomas or an Allen Ginsberg who needed experimentation and torn-up conventions. Such generalisations perhaps do nobody justice, but try to imagine Seferis writing *Howl* and you'll get the general idea.

Small details of the art of the Cappadocian churches mattered to him because they related directly to the way he worshipped and the way he thought about history. In one of his best-known poems, he emerges from a dream holding a marble bust, but it seems that he and the sculpture are moving in opposite directions and it is nearly dropped and broken. Once having survived this close encounter, however, the ancient artefact and the dreamer form an unbreakable link. I love this image of Serferis being appointed as the bust-holder. Who else? Who better?

Much about his life and work seems extremely deliberate. Even his own name had to be reinvented: not Seferiades like his father but Seferis like his grandfather. It meant one exempted from fasting because travelling and the Greek suffix "*-ades*" did not properly fit and had to go. A trivial example, you may say, but the deeper ranges of his mental life require more than a line or two to explain. In the Cappadocia book, he becomes interested in the two opposing traditions of Greek art: the noble, elegant, cerebral Hellenistic tradition which, he pointed out, could so easily have become victim to mere convention, and its other dimension that he calls demotic, born of imagination and impulse, which, he explains, arises in the "till recently ignored corners of Palestine and Syria, passes into Cappadocia, where it takes root and and enjoys a great expansion in the monolothic monasteries."

I notice in writing this essay that I keep thinking of Seferis as if he were always old, although much of his best-loved poetry was written by a young man.

> For me, paper is now the glass
> That fishermen use
> To see underwater.

This illuminating perception may sound as if written by an old man, but he was in his early thirties when he penned it. In 1963 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Four of the other finalists were WH Auden, Pablo Neruda, Samuel Beckett and Yukio Mishima. What an extraordinary line-up! Is there something we're missing here? ◆

Roger Norman is a novelist and teacher living in Eskişehir; rnorman@anadolu.edu.tr

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